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EDITORIAL

ALEX AND CASPAR

Before his Inauguration Day was over, Ronald Reagan had described the hostages in Iran as "prisoners." It was what Henry Kissinger would call a "nuance," but we'll be getting more of that tough talk soon.

On that same day, Caspar Weinberger was confirmed as Secretary of Defense with only North Carolina's two senators opposing. General Haig had to wait a moment before he could move into State and start pushing the cookie-pushers around. If anything is clear through the mists of celebratory rhetoric, it is the prospect that the big battles of the Reagan Administration will be fought between slippery Haig and determined Weinberger. The issue will be the proper definition and application of the doctrine of "national security."

The ex-general takes a much harder line toward the Soviet Union than Cap the Knife, the budget-cutter. Haig learned at Kissinger's knee in the Nixon White House how to find a Russian behind every bush, and he's not bad at the dreadful rhetoric that props up this world view. Weinberger is much more restrained in espousing the Reagan "We're Number Two" line.

We have had bellicose diplomats before but nothing quite like Haig. It is worth noting that, on his way to the premier Cabinet office, he mastered the National Security Adviser, the dubious Richard Allen. A generation ago Dean Rusk at State talked a tougher line than Robert McNamara at Defense, but that was more about Vietnam than about superpower confrontation.

Chairman Reagan of USA Inc. will have his hands full, at least from 9 to 5, keeping Haig and Weinberger apart. May the better man win at last his attention. On the record so far, that amounts to at least one cheer for the Secretary of Defense against a militarist Secretary of State with no known scruples.

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McCARTHY THEN AND NOW

COMES THE COUNTER-REVOLUTION

ALAN WOLFE

Many readers of this magazine suffered through the so-called McCarthy period. I did not, at least in any conscious way. I was 8 years old when Joseph McCarthy gave his speech in Wheeling, West Virginia, charging that there were Communists in the Government, and all of 12 when he took on the Army in 1954. Since, in the Jewish culture, one does not become a man until the age of 13, perhaps I could be forgiven for not knowing what the Senator was up to.

This was not true of some of my contemporaries, the "Red diaper" babies, whose youth did not provide an escape from the reaction of the times. Given the irrationality of the witch-hunt frenzy, a 4-year-old could be as "subversive" as a naïve adult. But in my apolitical family—"In my day," my father used to brag, "you were either a Communist, a socialist, or a Zionist, and I was none"—shelter was the urge, not political involvement. I knew that the Phillies won the pennant in 1950, but I did not know that the country was losing its conscience.

Forgive me, then, for sharing with veterans of one counterrevolution my reactions to another. In the last few years, the United States has embarked on a course so deeply reactionary, so negative and mean-spirited, so chauvinistic and self-deceptive that our times may soon rival the McCarthy era. I do not refer just to the election of Ronald Reagan; America's latest flirtation with reaction began before 1980. It was apparent in the futile attempts of Jimmy Carter to buy off the right by adopting its programs (a tactic also used by Harry Truman in 1948, with somewhat greater success). Reaction now, like reaction

(Continued on Page 111)

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LETTERS.

THE RELIGIOUS RIGHT

New York City

Leo Ribuffo has attempted to perform an important service in his effort to place the current concern over religious involvement in right-wing politics in a historical perspective ["Liberals and That Old-Time Religion," *The Nation*, Nov. 29, 1980]. His account only serves to emphasize the eternal vigilance with which constitutional liberties must be defended.

Nonetheless, it is at best myopic and at worst quite dangerous to view the often pathetic efforts made by liberals to counter these influences as a greater threat to civil liberties than the activities of the religious right itself. Those who advocate, for example, a constitutional amendment banning abortion propose to abrogate the rights of all women in the name of their individual religious and moral convictions. Those who use issues of personal moral choice as litmus tests for judicial appointments seek to use the state to impose a code of personal morality on all Americans. Far from being true conservatives, who would work to limit the role of the state in society, the religious right seeks a degree of government interference in personal affairs unprecedented in the history of this country. This, rather than any supposed double standard in the editorials of *The New York Times*, is the real danger that now confronts all Americans who value the liberties their constitution has represented.

It is all too true, as Ribuffo suggests, that condescension has not proven an effective antidote to the religious right-wing in the past. Yet no errors of judgment by past defenders of civil liberties justify the cavalier attitude he has displayed toward the present danger. These times demand greater responsibility and seriousness.

Eugene J. Lancaric

A.C.L.U. MISREPRESENTED

Washington, D.C.

Leo Ribuffo's article, "Liberals and That Old-Time Religion," asserts that I have chided right-wing churches for abusing their freedom from taxation. I have never spoken with Mr. Ribuffo and his citation is inaccurate.

The American Civil Liberties Union does oppose tax exemptions for religious bodies. We believe such exemptions violate the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. (The courts have rejected this view.) We also believe, however, that no organization, religious or otherwise, which has received a tax exemption should have that status revoked because it engages in nonpartisan, issue-oriented political expression. Thus, we recently successfully represented the United Church of Christ in a lawsuit challenging the Internal Revenue Service prohibition on publishing voting records of members of Congress. Moreover, the Washington State affiliate of the A.C.L.U. recently spoke out against an attempt by the Washington Public Disclosure Commission to gain access to the membership lists of the Moral Majority because it published candidates' positions on issues. The A.C.L.U. strongly disagrees with most of the Moral Majority's views, but we support their right to speak.

David Landau
Staff Counsel, A.C.L.U.

RIBUFFO REPLIES

Washington, D.C.

If Jerry Falwell had opened his publications to me, I certainly would have chastized the Moral Majority for self-righteousness and opposed a constitutional amendment banning abortion. As Mr. Lancaric inadvertently demonstrates, however, self-righteousness is not confined to the Moral Majority. Since *The Nation*, not Falwell, offered a forum, I found it neither cavalier, myopic nor unserious to consider, along with several other issues, the venerable tendency among liberals and radicals to applaud the "moral" fervor of the religious left while denouncing the "moralistic" fervor of the religious right. I was partly moved by a utopian desire to see political discussion transcend self-serving slogans and academic jargon. But I was equally concerned about the consequences *for the left* of its double standard on civil liberties and its misunderstanding of "born-again" Christians.

To reiterate, what Lancaric calls the "often pathetic" efforts by liberals to restrict free expression have usually backfired and are likely to backfire again. For example, when the Justice Department in 1948 indicted Eugene Dennis and eleven other Communists, Attorney General Tom Clark drew on his experience as head of the Criminal Division during *United States* v. *McWilliams*, the Roosevelt Administration's raucous prosecution of thirt nativist bigots, German agents an Bundists. The presiding judge in *Dennis* Harold R. Medina, studied the *McWilliams* record and decided to avoid com parable courtroom disruption by crack ing down on the Communist defendant and their lawyers. Although consistent commitment to civil liberties by the le will not dissuade the right from pro moting periodic Red scares, it migh just preserve a valuable line of defens

My reference to Mr. Landau was base on a *New York Times* story of Septem ber 24, 1980, containing his reaction t Humberto Cardinal Medeiros's attac on two candidates in Massachusett Congressional races. According to *Th Times*, "David Landau, staff counsel o the American Civil Liberties Union, as sailed the Cardinal's letter as a 'grea example' of how churches 'abuse' thei tax-exempt status by trying to influenc politics." If, on the basis of this ac count, I misconstrued the position o Landau or the A.C.L.U., I apologize Especially during the 1930s, 1940s an 1950s, however, the A.C.L.U. ofte declined to aid groups on the right o left that it deemed illegitimate. I an pleased that Landau anticipates a mor principled defense of freedom of ex pression during the 1980s.

For three decades, moreover, mos liberals and radicals have respond ed to allegedly rising "new" right either by ducking for cover in th name of realism or, in the fashion o Lancaric, by fulminating to one an other about the "unprecedented" me ace. Perhaps more effective tacti are available. Without compromisin on matters essential to women or hom sexuals, the left might even capture o of the right's favorite issues, the su posed decay of the family, and with it portion of the right's evangelical an Roman Catholic constituency. Beneat their ritual attacks on "immorality, people sense what Ronald Reagan family aptly illustrates—that denunc ations of permissiveness neither preve divorce nor insure togetherness. The le should be able to show that snickerin television programs put less strain o the family than poverty, unemplo ment, dreary and dangerous workin conditions and declining real incom The Rev. Jerry Falwell is an unlike convert to liberalism, but his follo ers—and potential followers—must n be written off.

Leo P. Ribuf

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EDITORIALS.

Inaugural Ball

A couple of weeks before the Inauguration, a friend of ours received a large (8½" by 11"), bent and somewhat dogeared envelope in the mail, the words DO NOT BEND prominently displayed on the front along with a return address: Presidential Inaugural Committee, Washington, D.C. Opening it, she discovered a large white invitation embossed with a raised gold seal depicting the Capitol dome. The invitation asked her "to attend and participate in" the Inauguration of Ronald Reagan.

She felt a surge of excitement and began mental calculations on the price of a suitable ball gown. Visions of playing Cinderella at the Republican gala, in her new dress and Nixon-era cloth coat, danced through her head. Ol' Blue Eyes would sing "Come Fly with Me" especially to her. Nancy would miraculously single her out in the crowd, squeeze her hand and say, "Now don't be a stranger these next four years." The President himself would ask her for the next waltz, and she would tell him that as far as *she* was concerned, he was much better in *Law and Order* than he was in *King's Row*, whatever the critics said.

Marring these fantasies a little was the thought that the post office had ignored the instructions not to bend the envelope. Was this a sign that the President wouldn't be able to get government off our backs after all? Then she noticed another piece of paper in the envelope. It was an order form with a list of "Official Commemoratives" of the Inauguration. There was a selection of Inaugural Medals. There were also special commemorative stamps, an "Official Inaugural License Plate" (choice of numbers or letters) and the "Official Inaugural Book" entitled *A Great New Beginning*, at $20 a copy. A bit commercial, she thought, but they said this Inauguration might cost $11 mil-

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lion, compared with $3 million for Carter's (Democratic inflation, no doubt). This free-enterprise approach was an example of the new Reagonomics. Would they finance defense spending with a Richard Viguerie direct-mail campaign?

While mulling over various combinations of letters for her Inaugural License Plate (too bad REAGAN COUNTRY wouldn't fit), her eye fell on the third stiff piece of paper in the envelope. On it, in flowing script, was a terse message: "This is a commemorative Invitation. It does not constitute admission to any of the Inaugural Events."

Sadly, she put the invitation away, along with her dreams. So this was the Great New Beginning. How many more broken promises to come?

. . . And speaking of broken promises, we go to press with the good news of the hostages' release ringing in our ears—and the discordant note from those who, like *The Wall Street Journal*, would renounce the agreement to release the hostages. The taking of the hostages was indefensible; their torture, if that is what it was, deserves exposure and universal condemnation. But it would be ironic if we ended up trying to preserve our national honor by breaking our promise.

Night Thoughts

Once trees were symbols. "Oak" and "word" from the same root. On the train ride from New York to Washington, D.C., one is surprised when trees appear. They are barely a reminder of trees. They stand only in the low spots—along the frozen gullies, around the refuse heaps—separating one industrial park from another, the railroad from the better tract houses.

What the tree once was, the Presidency has become—a symbol we take on to characterize ourselves. What the 1980 election showed more than anything was a national act of self-deprecation. We are no better than our worst fears, our basest motives. This aging actor of a football player has been chosen to represent us the way Dick Gregory, in 1968, said Nixon should be President. He is what we are.

The factories between New York and Wilmington—long, low buildings with windows of green glass—are surrounded by rows of older-model Chevrolets and Fords, which are surrounded by a fence, with a guard's booth here and there. In Perryville, a village of those long, sleek mobile homes of the early 1960s is aging on its pilings. To the west of the bridge across the Susquehanna River, a large crack runs through the ice, connecting Maryland to Maryland.

In front of the Capitol, they are testing a speaker system learned from Woodstock. The clear, sugary tones of Debby Boone can be heard from the House Office Buildings, from the Senate Office Buildings, across the ice flats of the mall. Marines in fatigues lean against freshly painted white rails guarding the rows of gold folding chairs they have set up one week ahead of time. Starred and striped banners hang from the Capitol roof. A modern white building constructed for television faces the platform for the Inauguration ceremony, blocking the view from the right side of the mall. It is a booth not unlike the ones used to monitor the Olympic ski-jump competition. Crawling under a barricade, a red-haired man poses like a statesman for his daughter to photograph in front of the Capitol.

Today, Patricia Derian bade farewell to her human-rights colleagues at a luncheon held in Rayburn House Office Building, Room 2318. She related how she had nearly resigned the night before, following the Carter decision to resume military aid to El Salvador. Then she realized that it was, finally, probably too late to resign. Among Alexander Haig's choices for Assistant Secretaries of State, there has been no name for the post of Assistant Secretary of State for Humanitarian Affairs.

At a meeting of several people concerned about the nomination of Jeane Kirkpatrick as Ambassador to the United Nations, it was revealed that *The Strategy of Deception*, which she had edited and introduced in 1964 (see Robert C. Sherrill, "The Professor & the C.I.A.," *The Nation*, Feb. 27, 1967), had been subsidized by the United States Information Agency. U.S.I.A. guidelines prohibit any kind of domestic propaganda. Could this information be introduced in her confirmation hearings? Does it still matter to anyone that the Government engaged in disinformation? That the strategist of deception may represent us among nations?

Today's *New York Times* carries a picture of a long-eared owl in Central Park, rarely seen in cities. On this eve, the nation waits for the man with the body of a 70-year-old swimmer, hair baked in Wildroot, wooden gestures, the look of someone always responding to cues, who knows the camera and the screen as others once knew the world.

On the train ride home—what America looks like at night. A big yellow cross appears below the track to the west. It is lit from within. A sign hangs from one arm of the cross: SUNDAY BREAKFAST MISSION. A flat-roofed white building half the height of the cross is a few feet away. A bunch of men stand in a circle by the door, blowing on their hands and stamping their feet in the half-inch snow. This is Wilmington, where you'll also find the sign: "American Scrap Iron and Metal Co.—Guaranteed Destruction of Confidential Records."

GEOFFREY RIPS

Geoffrey Rips is the coordinator of PEN's Freedom to Write Committee.

Defense Boomlet

A funny thing happened on the way to the great "corrective" recession of 1980. In August, a half year before economists anticipated it, industrial production turned upward. And contrary to almost unanimous expectation, real gross national product increased in the third quarter. Unemployment, which even the Administration forecast to go higher, leveled off below 8 percent. What had been the new element in the economy that lifted production out of the doldrums?

It was a burst of military business, so large that it

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simulated an actual mobilization for war in its economic effect. Of course everyone knew that military spending was increasing at a rate of 3 percent real growth per year, and that President Carter was aiming to accelerate that to 5 percent real growth. But when economists cranked those data into their computers, they added up to only a small fraction of a 1 percent increment to the G.N.P., which was already being pushed down several percent a year by other factors.

Speaking in February 1980, Lawrence Chimerene of Chase Econometrics compared the budgeted rise in defense spending with that of the Vietnam War buildup, and found the current round of arms spending only a fraction of the latter. But he and others neither foresaw nor took into account the following aspects of current military spending:

§ A disproportionate share of the budgeted increase is in military hardware—as opposed to payrolls, maintenance and the like. Spending for new equipment went up by about 10 percent "real" instead of 5 percent.

§ President Carter and Congress leapfrogged the defense budget so that authorizations for 1981 now stand about $15 billion above the originally published figure.

§ The Pentagon began giving out orders on a lavish scale commensurate not only with quantities already approved but also anticipating further increases to come.

As a result, the rate of increase in military business was comparable to that in the first full year of the Vietnam War. According to Commerce Department figures, defense spending shot up in three key categories during the second and third quarters of 1980, compared with 1979. In gross obligations incurred, the second and third quarter increases in 1980 over 1979 were 20 and 23 percent, respectively; in military prime-contract awards, 38 and 34 percent; and in value of manufacturers' new orders of defense projects, the increases were 40 and 56 percent. In contrast, during the Vietnam War buildup in 1966, increases in the first two categories over 1965 spending were 25 percent and 32 percent (figures in the third category are not available).

Thus, in the spring of 1980, the Carter Administration gave the plummeting economy a big transfusion of military business and increased the dose in the third quarter. The military-spending hike was the decisive factor in the economic turnaround during the third quarter.

It wasn't the only factor, of course. The Federal Reserve Board relaxed credit, and interest rates fell—temporarily, it turned out—so that there was some revival in automobiles and housing. In July, the big cost-of-living adjustment in Social Security payments and other indexed benefits partly counteracted the sharp fall in the real wages of employed workers. But the arms buildup gave the important extra shove that reversed the decline in G.N.P. True, military spending in 1979 accounted for a smaller share of the G.N.P. than it did in 1965; still, the boost as a percent of the G.N.P. already amounted to half of what occurred during the Vietnam War and will ultimately exceed it, under the projected Pentagon-Reagan program.

Currently, most economists expect a "double dip" recession in 1981, triggered by the fresh surge of interest rates to all-time peaks. There are understandable fears of massive bankruptcies. The military buildup contributed in two ways to the big surge in borrowing which made possible the super-high interest rates: through rapidly expanding the Federal deficit and hence Treasury borrowing, and through borrowing by defense contractors and subcontractors to accumulate materials, add capacity and otherwise finance expanded production in advance of Pentagon payment.

Autos and housing are squeezed, first of all, by the high interest rates. The armaments and energy-related investment boom is squeezing out the consumer economy. The Reaganite attack on mass living standards through lowering real minimum wages and Social Security benefits, eliminating affirmative action and attacking trade union rights aims to rechannel the national income to profits and the Pentagon in accordance with this reordering of production priorities.

If the plans of Reagan's defense advisers—as recently revealed by *Fortune*—are carried out, the national defense authorizations will surpass $350 billion in present dollars by 1985 (allowing conservatively for an inflation rate of 9 percent). To that must be added more hundreds of billions for Government-subsidized synfuels development; a further acceleration of oil and gas drilling as prices are decontrolled; and a more liberal leasing policy on Government lands, among other things. In short, the MX racetrack, the Overthrust Belt and Silicon Valley will displace mass transit systems, housing developments and Detroit.

There may be a *temporary* slackening of military orders while the Pentagon waits for the Reagan Administration's changes in the distribution of the business to take shape. Such a slackening, coinciding with the decline in the durable consumer sector, would account for a double dip decline in overall production.

But with a fresh surge in armament business impending, an *early* return to a major recession seems unlikely. The double dip, if it appears, is not likely to last long. But the recovery, with or without such an interruption, will be uneven and unbalanced. Over the long term, the inexorable law that military spending provides fewer jobs and creates more inflation than civilian spending will assert itself. The U.S. economy no longer has the reserves for an intense arms race on an unregulated private-enterprise basis. Without wartime mobilization, the special Pentagon role in the current weak economic recovery sets the stage for runaway inflation, another dollar crisis and the next, and worse, cyclical recession.

Such respected establishment economists as Sam Nakagama (Kidder Peabody) and Henry Kaufman (Salomon Brothers) have warned of the dangers arising from a too-rapid acceleration in arms spending. Will enough ordinary Americans take action to stay the hand of an incoming Pentagon-oriented Administration and Congress in time?

VICTOR PERLO

Victor Perlo is economic columnist for the Daily World *and a member of the faculty of the New School for Social Research. His most recent books are* Militarism & Industry, Unstable Economy *and* The Economics of Racism *(all International Publishers).*

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DISPATCHES.

■ LIBYA: Missiles for Qaddafi?

The controversial West German rocket company, Otrag, which was forced to leave its private reserve in eastern Zaire under political pressure in 1979, has quietly relocated in Libya, where it is scheduled to conduct its fourth test launch this month. Libyan leader Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi has permitted Otrag to operate completely free of charge at a remote site in the Sahara Desert some 600 miles south of Tripoli.

The Orbital Transport-und Raketen-Aktiengesellschaft (Otrag) first attracted attention in 1977 when its secret contract with Zaire's President Mobutu was exposed in the Paris monthly *Afrique-Asie*. The deal allowed Otrag virtual control over a 100,000-square-kilometer jungle area until the year 2000 in return for $25 million a year. Otrag's president, Lutz Kayser, insisted that the operation in Zaire was an effort to develop a low-cost rocket to launch satellites, but he acknowledged to *Der Spiegel* that "of course everything could be used militarily." Since Otrag maintained great secrecy at the site, speculation flourished about what was going on there. The governments of neighboring countries—Angola, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia—expressed the fear that Otrag was developing offensive military weapons intended for use against them. The Soviet Union, East Germany and Cuba charged that the Otrag site was a Western military outpost in central Africa. And journalist Tad Szulc, citing intelligence sources, claimed that Otrag was a West German scheme to test cruise missiles and military rockets.

Otrag officials in Munich told *Aviation Week & Space Technology* last month that the company already has six orders totaling $6 million from unidentified customers to begin space launches by the end of 1982. "Otrag holds an important advantage over the [U.S.] space shuttle," a company spokesman added, "by being entirely free to launch reconnaissance and earth resources satellites for any country, some of which may be politically too sensitive for NASA."

Qaddafi's new relationship with the West German rocket makers is certain to disturb Libya's African and Middle Eastern neighbors, who are already concerned about Qaddafi's expansionist drive into Chad and about reports that Libya has financed development of a Pakistani nuclear bomb.

■ AUSTRALIA: Alcoa's Desecration

In defiance of Aboriginal protests, Alcoa is bulldozing and burning the Danger Point heathlands near Portland, Australia, to begin construction of a $350 million to $400 million aluminum smelter. The site contains Stone Age relics and burial grounds sacred to the Gunditj-Mara tribe and other Aboriginal people.

"Another multinational has desecrated our land, but we will continue to resist," vows Les Russell, chairman of Australia's Aboriginal Mining Information Center. Police arrested seventeen Aboriginal demonstrators last month when they sat down in front of Alcoa's earthmovers. Skirmishes with the company and the police have continued and a rotating group of twenty to 100 protesters remains camped on the edge of the construction site. In a phone interview, Russell told us that protest delegations have also visited the local residence of Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser, who represents the district in Parliament, but Fraser refused to meet with them.

The Alcoa smelter, which will be one of the biggest in the world, is slated for completion by April 1983. The Australian Government approved the smelter for operation with an emission-control standard that is 20 percent below American levels. The Alcoa project is one of many by U.S. firms; American investment in Australia, particularly in mining, is booming. The American Chamber of Commerce's Australian branch reports that total U.S. investment has risen to $6.4 billion—surpassed only by U.S. investments in five other countries. Many new mining operations by U.S. and other multinationals are encroaching on Aboriginal reserves and historical sites.

"Multinationals control about 75 percent of the land here in Victoria [one of Australia's six states]," Russell said. "They are after coal, gold, copper, lead, zinc, silver, oil, natural gas, diamonds and uranium, everything. The worst thing is that they always seem to single out our most sacred sites, the few we have left, for their mining and refining." In the case of the Alcoa smelter, two Aboriginal women, Lorraine Onus and Christina Frankland, asked the Supreme Court to block the project under the Archaeological and Aboriginal Relics Preservation Act, but their claim was rejected last November. "The courts have let Alcoa off scot-free," Russell said, "but that won't stop us from trying to save our cultural heritage."

■ CHILE: Fruits of Friedmanism

Chile's "Chicago boys," the University of Chicago-trained economists serving the Pinochet Government, decreed in 1974 that Chile's businesses would henceforth have to compete with outsiders. Tariffs were gradually lowered from an average 100 percent to a uniform 10 percent, leading to a flood of imports. This policy has cost Chile $8.5 billion since 1974 and led to the bankruptcy of 1,575 companies, according to a new study by the respected Chilean economist Ricardo Ffrench Davis. The study has caused a stir in Chile, where it was described in the moderately oppositionist *Hoy* last month. Ffrench Davis, himself University of Chicago-educated, is the author of a textbook which is widely used in international economics classes in Latin America. He is associated with *Cieplan*, an economics think tank in Santiago with close ties to the Christian Democratic Party.

According to Ffrench Davis, the opening up of Chile's economy through lowered tariffs has no historical precedent in any of the world's semi-industrialized countries. Even the United States and Western Europe have insulated their tex-

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ELIZABETH FARNSWORTH AND STEPHEN TALBOT

iles and footwear industries from outside competition. Ffrench Davis wants Chileans to understand the costs of the Government's decision to drastically cut tariffs and pursue other policies aimed at encouraging competition from abroad. He argues that these policies have led to industrial growth rates 25 percent below what has historically been normal for Chile and estimates losses due to the low growth rate at $8.5 billion.

In the past two years alone, 100 companies manufacturing clothing and footwear—the sectors hardest hit by the tariff policy—have gone bankrupt. Some were bought up by giant industrial groups, contributing to a further concentration of Chile's wealth. Others closed down completely, adding to already high unemployment. The Government admits to a 16 percent unemployment rate, but unofficial figures are higher. [See Cynthia Brown, "The High Cost of Monetarism in Chile," *The Nation*, September 27, 1980.] Raul Saez, who earlier served the junta as Minister of Economic Coordination and is now a critic of Government economic policies, has estimated Chile's true unemployment rate to be around 30 percent.

■ SOUTH AFRICA: Black Union Power

Ever since black workers at Ford's Cortina plant in Port Elizabeth won a major strike early last year, independent, politically conscious black trade unions have mushroomed throughout South Africa and led an almost uninterrupted series of militant strikes among manufacturing and municipal workers. Although black unions are legal, South Africa's apartheid regime established an elaborate system of registration and control designed to keep the unions nonpolitical and severely restricting the right to strike. Among black labor, however, a new spirit of militancy has risen up to challenge the Government. "We are entering a new era in South Africa," Tozamile Botha, the 32-year-old, barrel-chested leader of the watershed Ford strike, told us. "People are becoming aware of their labor power. They see freedom coming nearer."

Botha was arrested, released, then banned by the South African authorities. He is now in exile and plans to work in Lesotho, the tiny black country surrounded by South Africa. Lesotho will be a precarious base of operations, but Botha said he is prepared to take the risk to be closer to the vital labor movement at home.

During a recent tour of the United States and Canada, Botha testified before a United Nations committee and Representative Stephen Solarz's House Subcommittee on Africa, stressing his opposition to U.S. bank loans and investment in South Africa and criticizing the "Sullivan Principles," the code of conduct for U.S. multinationals in South Africa drawn up by the Rev. Leon Sullivan, a black member of the General Motors board of directors. "The U.S. companies like Ford are in my country to benefit from the cheap labor system," Botha says. "Their claim is that blacks will starve if they pull out. But three million blacks are already starving in the rural Bantustan areas —the labor reserves—and those of us with jobs in the cities are prepared to suffer. That is the penalty we are prepared to pay for real political change in South Africa."

Botha met with a number of U.S. labor leaders, including United Auto Worker officials who honored him with a reception at Solidarity House in Detroit. He appealed for support from the U.S. labor movement, urging longshoremen to refuse to handle South African goods and asking unions to withdraw their pension investments from corporations operating in South Africa. "If you can aid the workers in Poland," Botha told them, "you should support us in South Africa."

■ GUATEMALA: The Subversive Bible

Father Ronald Burke, missionary, teacher, parish priest for the past fifteen years to 3,000 Cakchiquel Indians in the highlands of Guatemala, is targeted for death. His school in Chimaltenango has virtually closed down, his staff is terrorized and his parishioners in a little village outside Chimaltenango are burying their catechism certificates and their Bibles. One of the parish leaders, a "delegate of the Word," was killed last fall. Tortured, shot eight times and left to die in a ditch, he was found with a death list in his hand, put there by his killers. Father Burke's name was on the list. Like hundreds of other priests, nuns and lay religious leaders in Guatemala, he is a marked man, labeled a "Communist" for his work among the Indians.

Father Burke considers himself a Christian moderate. "What we did was so innocuous," he told us in a recent interview in San Francisco, where he says he is "on hold" until he can get back to Guatemala. "We didn't work with any political groups, though some of the people in our groups were activists. But our mission did help develop leaders among the Cakchiquel, and that, in Guatemala, is a crime."

"At the center in Chimaltenango we trained 150 ministers," Burke continued. "We studied the Bible and church documents with hundreds of Cakchiquel. With its emphasis on justice, the Bible is now considered to be subversive by Guatemala's Government, and the church documents—especially those which deal with human rights—are seen as furthering revolution."

Besides his work with the center, Father Burke helped organize nine Christian "base communities" in his parish outside Chimaltenango. Members of the communities organized schools, helped the destitute, studied the Bible and met regularly to discuss community problems. Now, says Father Burke, all nine of the communities are "trying to pretend they don't exist."

The Guatemalan Government and the paramilitary death squads that work closely with it blame the Catholic Church for the growth in political militancy of Indian groups like the Cakchiquel. Five priests and hundreds of lay religious leaders were killed last year. In an act unprecedented in Guatemalan history, Bishop Juan Gerardi ordered the churches under his jurisdiction closed last summer after two priests were murdered and his life was threatened.

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ARTICLES.

THE ASCHER MEMORANDUM

The World Bank Writes Off Marcos & Co.

WALDEN BELLO and JOHN KELLY

The World Bank is still reeling from what many regard as one of the biggest scandals in its recent history: the public disclosure of the Ascher Memorandum. Leaked to the Congress Task Force of the Anti-Martial Law Coalition and *CounterSpy* magazine on December 1, 1980, the memo was indeed explosive, not only for its content but also for the rare glimpse it afforded of the cold rationality and lucid "class consciousness" that guide the actions of one of the capitalist world's most tight-lipped institutions.

The subject of the fourteen-page study, which Bank officials publicly sought to downgrade as a "think piece" after its disclosure, is the condition of the Marcos dictatorship in the Philippines. Its aim: to chart ways in which the Bank can distance itself from a regime that is fast slipping into a crisis like that in Nicaragua during Anastasio Somoza's final days.

Prepared by World Bank staff members and consultants under the direction of William Ascher, a member of the Bank's key Central Projects Division and a "political risk" specialist at Johns Hopkins University, the memo projects the "increasing precariousness of the current administration, which could result in the lifting of martial law under a parliamentary system in which President Marcos, even if initially situated as Prime Minister, would have serious difficulty remaining in power; or a military government."

The World Bank has good reason to be worried: since the imposition of martial law in September 1972, it has poured more than $2 billion in loans into the Philippines, with another $3 billion budgeted for the years 1981 through 1986. And Marcos has equally good reasons to fret over the Bank's assessment of his staying power: not only is the Bank his biggest source of development aid but so long as it continues to regard the regime as a good credit risk, international private bankers and corporations will keep the loans and investments flowing at the present massive rate.

The Ascher report presents a dismaying picture of an experiment in authoritarian development that is being torn apart by the contradictions it has spawned. Forty percent of the aid program of $1.7 billion for the period 1976-80 was allocated to Robert McNamara's grand panacea: "rural development." That these millions were wasted is indicated in the memo's grim assessment that there has been "little improvement in the administrative capacity of the bureaucracy, and hence in undertaking or even attempting rural development projects."

But the failure of Marcos's "industrial reform" strategy, with which the Bank is deeply involved, is causing the greatest anxieties. Under strong pressure from both the Bank and the International Monetary Fund (I.M.F.), the dictatorship committed itself in 1979 to a wide-ranging effort to "liberalize" Philippine industry. This effort involved dismantling protective tariffs, withdrawing subsidies from local entrepreneurs, creating attractive incentives for foreign investors and establishing "export processing zones" or tax-free havens to which multinational corporations are lured to relocate some of their operations while taking advantage of cheap Filipino labor. The central idea of the program is "export-led industrialization," which seeks to reorient Philippine industry from domestic needs to production for the export market, with the "indispensable" assistance of foreign capital.

The regime has been sluggish in implementing these measures since the Bank first proposed them in the mid-1970s, for understandable reasons. The prescription implied the virtual elimination of the local entrepreneurial class, one of Ferdinand Marcos's crucial sources of domestic support. The Bank was fully conscious of this outcome from the start. As the Ascher memo candidly admits, "Protectionism, one of the few bulwarks of the precarious private entrepreneurial sector, is the major target of the liberalization program."

The industrial reform plan has backfired, asserts the study, because the local business class has not yielded quietly but instead gone into active opposition—thus creating the conditions for a multiclass alliance based on an explosive mixture of nationalism and anti-Marcos sentiment:

> The elimination of protective tariffs and special subsidies has led to great dissatisfaction within the industries targeted for "streamlining." Therefore, in the Philippines, where the additional element of strongly perceived favoritism to Marcos's personal friends has created considerable resentment, the local business community has several mutually reinforcing reasons to try to undermine the policy directions of the current government.

Local entrepreneurs, the memorandum goes on,

> are now using the nationalist argument to criticize the government's policy, thereby finding common ground with the more ideologically oriented opposition centered at the universities.
>
> If nationalism is the general appeal of the opposition's attack on Marcos's economic policy, anti-American sentiment is its most immediate and growing manifestation. Even though much of recent foreign investment is in fact from Japan and Western Europe, the flow of foreign investment has been portrayed by critics as American recolonialization.

Walden Bello is director of the Congress Task Force of the Anti-Martial Law Coalition. John Kelly is editor of CounterSpy *magazine and the author of the forthcoming book* CIA in America: Destabilization of Democracy at Home *(Lawrence Hill).*

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To Filipinos, the study acknowledges, increased U.S. domination of the economy is an inevitable adjunct of World Bank participation in the industrial reforms:

> Multinational corporations have become more important, and the investment-promotion efforts of the administration are attracting more investment from such companies as Ford, Shell, and American Can Company; foreign investment in 1980 will be more than five times the annual average from the previous decade.
>
> The World Bank's *imprimatur* on the industrial program runs the risk of drawing criticism of the Bank as the servant of multinational corporations and particularly of U.S. economic imperialism.

The desertion of the national bourgeoisie has created a situation very similar to that which obtained in Somoza's Nicaragua: business going into active opposition and driven into an alliance with the left, and a dictator, who has no social base except a privileged army and a loyal retinue of bureaucrat-capitalists, growing more repressive. [See Brennon Jones, "Marcos's Influential Enemies," *The Nation*, October 4, 1980.] The volatile situation, says the memo, could lead to three alternative "political scenarios":

§Intervention by the military and the installation of a Government dominated by younger nationalistic officers;

§Restoration of a democratic system dominated by an "inter-class" coalition glued together by nationalism and protectionism;

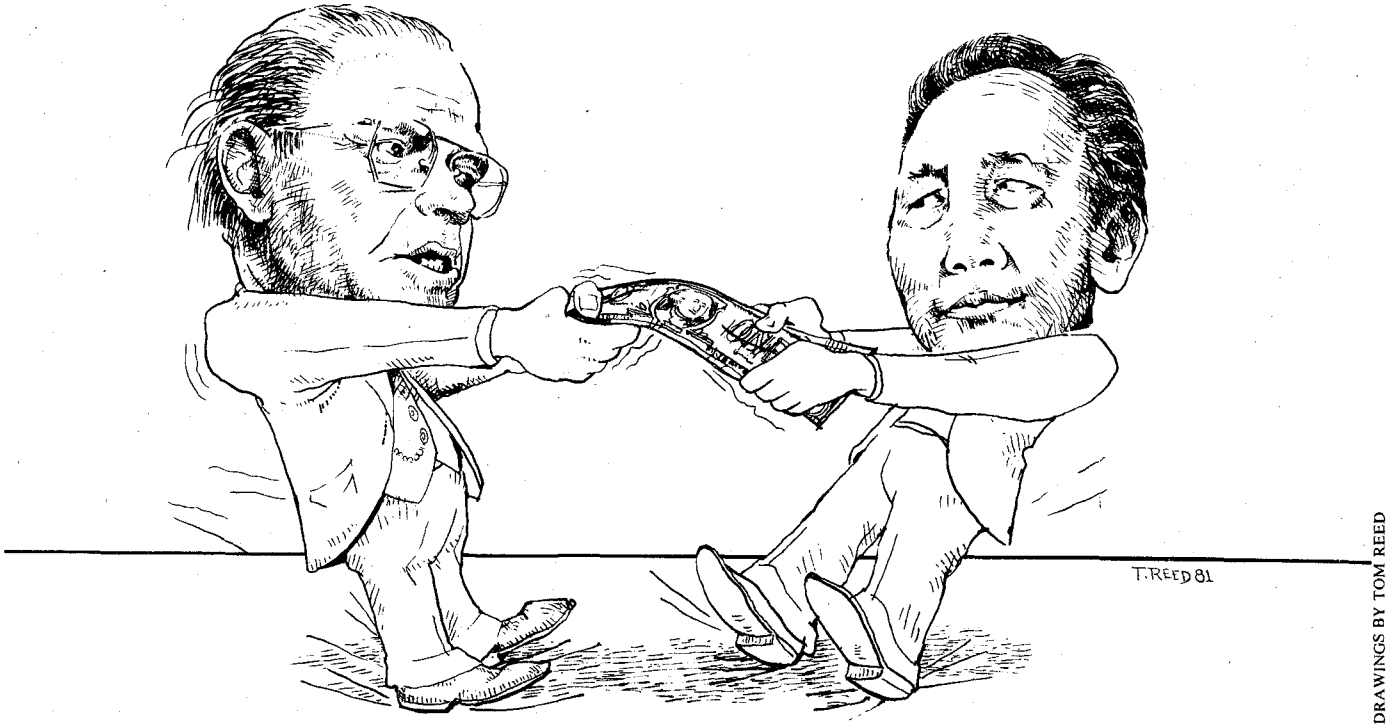
§A period of revolutionary upheaval exploited by anti-Government guerrillas of the leftist New People's Army, which "could appear as the main armed opponent of the Government if things fall apart dramatically after Marcos."

None of these scenarios include the Marcos Government's Ivy League-trained technocrats, who are the Bank's most effective agents. "The technocrats have no power base," the report points out, "except through their connection with Marcos and his close allies, making it unlikely that they could battle back into power unless and until the new administration wants them."

The hard-boiled realism and bleak mood of the Ascher report contrasts starkly with the euphoric assessments of Marcos during the halcyon days of the early 1970s, when the Bank decided to make the Philippines a "country of concentration" to which the flow of aid in the next few years would be "higher than average for countries of similar size and income," in the words of a confidential 1976 World Bank report. Although Amnesty International had by then issued its well-known 1976 report on torture in the Philippines, Bank bureaucrats were asserting, "While the country is formally under martial law, the basic strategy of the government is to resort as little as possible to outright coercion and to broaden support through the development of effective economic and social programs."

With its aggressive support for Marcos and its approach of development from above, the World Bank had jumped squarely in the middle of Philippine political controversy. When the Bank and the regime tried to relocate 100,000 tribal Filipinos and flood out more than 3,000 acres of one of the world's most energy-efficient systems of rice growing to make way for the massive Chico River hydroelectric complex, fierce resistance from its intended victims effectively stymied the project. The Bank also blundered into a mine field when it sought to relocate 2,000 poor families living in the Tondo area of Manila in order to expand port facilities to service multinational firms. Squatter resistance, like that of the tribal Filipinos, also forced a standoff.

The Bank's experts in the field began to report facts that management either refused to acknowledge or sought to



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minimize. In a January 1980 study, for instance, an agricultural mission likened the Government's showcase Masagana 99 rural credit program to a "natural disaster." Other studies confirmed what was already clear to most Filipinos by 1974: that the regime's highly touted land-reform program had stalled, irreversibly. Most disturbing, however, was the conclusion of a high-powered 1979 "poverty mission" that the "startling" 50 percent decline in the real wages of Filipino workers between 1965 and 1975—the years of escalating commitment to the Philippines—was due in large part to the devaluation of the peso that was imposed by the I.M.F. and the Bank in 1969.

By the beginning of 1980, the Bank could no longer ignore the failure of its export-led growth policies. Having drastically reoriented Philippine industrial development away from production for internal consumption, the Bank and the I.M.F. had placed the country almost totally at the mercy of the international market at a time of rising protectionism in the advanced capitalist countries. In the space of a few years, thirty-two major restrictions were slapped on Philippine products by ten countries. Textile exports, which were regarded by the Bank and the Government as the "locomotive" of its strategy of encouraging "nontraditional" light-manufactured exports, have been especially hard hit, forcing the I.M.F. to concede that "export promotion has become particularly difficult in the present climate of uncertainty as well as trade restrictions faced by Philippine exporters." Export-led industrialization, it became clear, merely deepened the Philippines' chronic dependency as an agricultural-export economy. The realization that the strategy was a dead end was perhaps most dramatically underscored by the Bank's alarming projection that the Philippines' external debt will soar from $12.2 billion in 1980 to $19.3 billion in 1984.

It was in the midst of growing desperation and confusion among the Bank, I.M.F. and other international backers of the regime that a wave of bombings of establishments linked to Marcos hit Manila in the summer of 1980. Key sectors of the local business class, the Bank could easily see, had gone into violent opposition. While the immediate motivation of the "bourgeois bombers" was anti-Marcos feeling, the Bank correctly anticipated that this could swiftly become anti-American and nationalist, clearing the way for an alliance between businessmen and the mass-based left.

The Ascher Memorandum was prepared without the knowledge of the Marcos dictatorship for this week's crucial meeting in Paris of the Consultative Group of governments, development agencies and multinational banks for the purpose of setting international lending levels for the Philippines, but it has served to bare the World Bank's deeper dilemma. While it expresses a preference for Marcos and his technocrats, the memorandum sees the handwriting on the wall. To cut its losses and place itself in a better bargaining position with a successor government, the Bank may find itself playing the distasteful role of Dr. Frankenstein—helping to bring down a creature of its own making. The problem is not, of course, unique to the Bank. It is, indeed, the dilemma of its principal sponsor, the United States. □

THE MAKING OF REAGAN (I)

The President From G.E.

PATRICK OWENS

Harry Truman failed at haberdashery. Richard Nixon was rejected by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Neither would likely have become President, or even a serious politician, but for those setbacks. Ronald Reagan followed a slightly different route. First he wowed 'em in Vegas.

Reagan says in his autobiography, *Where's the Rest of Me?*, that when motion picture roles became scarce, he was reduced to hosting a show at The Last Frontier, a Las Vegas nightclub. The future President rattled off a monologue and hammed it up with a song-and-dance team. "We had a wonderfully successful two weeks, with a sellout every night and offers from the Waldorf in New York and top clubs from Miami to Chicago," he recalled a dozen years later. He had been paid as much for the fortnight as he could get for a movie. But Reagan and his present wife, Nancy, rejected this glittering future. He'd learned a useful lesson, though: "Actually, I was amazed then and still am, looking back, at what a salable commodity picture stardom is."

So in 1954, Reagan went into more dignified work, as spokesman for the General Electric Company and host of its weekly television program, *G.E. Theater*. That run lasted eight years. The TV show followed Ed Sullivan's hugely popular variety program and exposed Reagan to tens of millions of viewers. By the estimate of one of his collaborators, he shook hands with 140,000 G.E. workers in his annual eight-week factory tour. Millions of other Americans heard him as he sounded off before chambers of commerce, civic clubs and trade associations around the country. He worked harder every year, making up to two dozen appearances a day his final season. These ranged from cameo chats with several dozen workers to full-dress speeches before conventions of national trade associations.

Nothing quite like Reagan's role with G.E. has ever been tried before or since. He was an actor, former president of the movie actors' union and had almost no industrial or other business experience. But Reagan had become fiercely anti-Communist in Hollywood. Stumping for G.E., he added that company's hostility to government regulation to his

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Patrick Owens is a Washington correspondent for Newsday. *He encountered Boulwarism as reporter and managing editor of the* Columbia Basin News, *a daily paper published near the Hanford Atomic Works, and as labor writer for* The Detroit Free Press *and the Knight Newspapers. He covered a typical Reagan speech—before the state chamber of commerce—for* The Arkansas Gazette *at Little Rock in 1960.*

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repertory, along with a whiff of the primitive anti-unionism G.E. was trying out. Friends Reagan made on his G.E. campaigns became important workers in his Presidential efforts. Alliances that he formed with other ideological and political spokesmen played a big role in advancing his fortunes. And many of his most vigorous foes—including most of the nation's labor leaders—first glimpsed an adversary in those eight years.

The G.E. labor relations policy came to be called Boulwarism, after Lemuel Boulware, a corporate vice president who devised and then executed it. Among big firms with established unions, G.E.'s anti-labor attitude was unique. Edward Langley, a former G.E. public relations man who is now a writer in Queens, New York, has written: "Employees were inundated with messages. They even found them stuffed in their pay envelopes: The evils of big government, big unions, the 'something for nothing attitude.' " Tons of this material were generated in New York and mailed out for reproduction in G.E.'s plant newspapers, Langley recalled.

Langley and David Williams, attorney and negotiator for the past thirty years for the Hanford (Washington) Atomic Metal Trades Council, recall one particularly noxious item, "The Fable of the Herd," in which G.E. implicitly likened workers to cattle while extolling the virtues of teamwork and docility. G.E. even sent agents to union conventions, where they mingled with reporters in the pressrooms, picking their brains for information about union activities and jawboning them with G.E.'s positions on the issues that arose.

The centerpiece of Boulwarism was its single-offer collective bargaining strategy, in which the company presented what Boulware called "a tempting dish" and then refused to negotiate further. Between 1960 and 1969, the National Labor Relations Board and a Federal Court of Appeals found that the strategy represented an unlawful refusal to bargain. The Supreme Court upheld the finding by declining to review it in 1970.

Boulware, who retired from G.E. in 1961, is 85 now and living in Delray Beach, Florida, where he golfs regularly and says frankly that he is isolated by age and geography. In a lengthy telephone interview, he denied any involvement with Reagan at G.E., except for a chat of perhaps ten minutes in Boulware's office in 1954, when Reagan and his wife first visited G.E. headquarters in New York. But Reagan started his work for G.E. when Boulware was vice president for both public and employee relations. Both Reagan's plant and community visits were therefore within Boulware's jurisdiction. G.E. acknowledges that Reagan's pay came out of the public relations budget that Boulware supervised.

Was Reagan simply a mouthpiece for corporate policy? Reagan, Boulware and other G.E. officials have always insisted that the company never told its spokesman what to say. "Yes, and it always snows on the Fourth of July," David Williams scoffs. Other labor relations and public affairs experts doubt that a corporation would pay an actor a reported $125,000 a year and send him around to talk to all of its workers without offering some guidance. According to gossip at the time, Langley recalls, Reagan discussed policy directly with Ralph Cordiner, the G.E. chairman.

In at least one case, Reagan switched gears to please G.E. He had excoriated the Tennessee Valley Authority as a socialistic freeloader that paid no taxes. T.V.A. demanded an apology, and mentioned $50 million in generators G.E. was building for it. G.E. responded that it did not tell Reagan what to say. Reagan has confirmed this, adding that he dropped T.V.A. from his standard speech after talking by phone with Cordiner. The spokesman explained in his autobiography: "Dropping T.V.A. from the speech was no problem. You can reach out blindfolded and grab a hundred examples of overgrown government."

In any case, Reagan said little in the eight years to pain Boulware or G.E., both of whom had become contributors to right-wing causes. Langley says that Reagan was the most effective ambassador of good will in industrial history, playing "a sort of roguish shop steward, giving the managers mild needles while advancing company thoughts directed at productivity." Langley recalls something that became corporate lore: When Reagan visited the heat pump plant at Tyler, Texas, he told of G.E.'s conversion of his house in California to all-electric operation. "One thing gives me problems. It's the heat pump," Reagan allegedly said. "After meeting your plant manager, now I know why." After such a sally, Reagan had every ear, Langley says. But mostly, recalls Williams, his in-plant speeches were "the same stuff he was telling the chambers of commerce." G.E. hires many women workers, and Reagan was especially effective with them. "He came in and left 'em swooning," says John Callahan, who in those years headed the G.E. Conference Board for the International Union of Electrical Workers.

Langley, who traveled with Reagan in 1957, recalls a

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quarrel with George Dalen, Reagan's regular escort on the circuit and a former F.B.I. man. "We were on the Blue Ridge Parkway and Dalen said something unkind about Eleanor Roosevelt. It really got Reagan going. He was a great admirer of hers. . . . Over the years Reagan did move pretty well over to conservatism, but he was never passive about it. He would argue. He had to be persuaded."

Reagan seems never to have meddled in specific bargaining-table issues. Instead, he preached a more general doctrine of worker enthusiasm and cooperation, along with hostility to Communism and Big Government. He promoted a phased tax-cut proposal then in Congress, a scheme not unlike the Kemp-Roth plan that he advocated during the 1980 campaign. Social Security was always a target. The bureaucrats considered it "a welfare program whose benefits can be canceled at any time," Reagan charged. He liked to announce that a young man of 20 or 21 could take his and his employer's Social Security contributions and invest them in an insurance policy that would pay him almost double the benefits he could hope to get from Social Security. Some other things Reagan said in those days:

§"The government today is engaged in operating and running more than 17,500 businesses covering forty-seven different lines of activity. These businesses operate tax-free, rent-free and dividend-free. . . . And in the process each year they lose almost as many billions of dollars as are collected by the Federal Government from the personal income tax."

§"Wars end in victory or defeat. One of the foremost authorities on Communism in the world today has said [that we] have ten years. Not ten years to make up our minds, but ten years to win or lose—by 1970 the world will be all slave or all free."

§"We have received this progressive [income] tax directly from Karl Marx who designed it as the prime essential of a socialist state."

The title of Reagan's standard G.E. speech became "Losing Freedom by Installments." He had a predeliction for loose talk even then, but apologists were not lacking. One Bob McMann, for example, wrote in a 1961 column in the *Iowa Farm Bureau News* that Reagan had been accused on television of seven substantial errors in forty statements. "So when you think perhaps Reagan was wrong seven times, he was right thirty-three times and that amounts to a lot of those freedoms we are losing by installments," McMann calculated.

In its labor relations, G.E. avoided ideology. Although the C.I.O. had expelled the United Electrical Workers (U.E.) for Communist affiliations and chartered a competing union, the International Union of Electrical Workers (I.U.E.), G.E. was repeatedly accused of favoring U.E. Its motive, labor experts assumed, was that the Communist-tainted union was more vulnerable, hence easier to bargain with. The pattern that had developed before Reagan arrived at G.E. was of a quick settlement with the U.E., which G.E. then refused to enhance in its bargaining with the I.U.E. As Herbert Northrup, a Boulware lieutenant who became chairman of the department of industry at the Wharton School of Finance, wrote in his book, *Boulwarism: The Labor Relations Policies of the General Electric Company*: "Boulwarism as a concept proposes to try to do what is right. This means in practice offering the I.U.E. . . . the same value economic package that is offered to other unions or is made available to other employes."

A Senate labor subcommittee chaired by Hubert Humphrey declared itself amazed by G.E.'s coziness with the "Communist" U.E. as against the non-Communist I.U.E. "Not to make any distinction, as apparently General Electric and other employers have not, is to play the Communist theme song," the subcommittee said in its final report.

Reagan served as president of the Screen Actors Guild from 1947 through 1952, and again for the first half of 1960, when he was also under contract to represent G.E. Kim Felner, the guild's present public relations director, describes Reagan as a very influential president. Reagan led an anti-Communist faction that collaborated with Congressional investigators and accepted the blacklisting of hundreds of the union's members. Reagan claimed that Communist attempts to take over the movie industry were behind jurisdictional strikes that kept Hollywood in turmoil for years, starting in 1945 (see next article).

Actually, as present Screen Actors Guild officials assert, the strikes were in large measure efforts to escape the domination of craft work in the movies by the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (I.A.T.S.E.). Reagan did not tell his audiences that the jurisdictional disputes stemmed largely from efforts by I.A.T.S.E. members to leave a thug-dominated union whose past leaders, Willie Bioff and George Browne, had gone to prison in 1940 for extortion. He did not note, either, that the leftists leading the opposition to I.A.T.S.E. had reputations as solid, effective unionists, or that Communist influence on the strikes was severely limited.

In his G.E. days, Reagan liked to tell interviewers that the Communists had threatened him with an acid face bath. He told a St. Louis reporter that such tactics had sent him into the ideological wars. "Once you've been 'target for tonight' you kind of stay in the fight," he added.

Boulware said that G.E. was not concerned about Reagan's views when it hired its television host and spokesman. Still, on its face, the hiring of a union leader who was militantly anti-Communist by an anti-union company that preferred to deal with a leftist union ranks as one of the more bizarre alliances of the McCarthy days. Reagan, however, found the new career salve to his bruised actor's ego. Indeed, his G.E. activities prompted far warmer responses than he had received as a movie star. From the beginning, people who heard his speeches said he belonged in politics. He branched out, recording a pitch against Medicare for the American Medical Association that was distributed to every physician in the country. Their wives were asked to play the recording at coffee klatches for friends and neighbors.

G.E. Theater left the air in 1962, a year after Boulware's

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etirement. G.E. by then had image problems well beyond ny actor's powers of persuasion. The corporation had lmost broken the I.U.E. in a three-week strike in 1960 but ıad itself become notorious for its labor-baiting. Then, in 961, three G.E. officials went to jail in the largest price-ixing scandal in U.S. corporate history. One of the cus-omers whose prices had been jacked up was the T.V.A.

Reagan became a freelance advocate of conservative :auses and issues. He narrated two long anti-Communist ilms for a far-right producer headquartered at Pepperdine College in California and continued to speak around the :ountry. In 1964, he made a nationally televised speech sup-›orting Barry Goldwater's Presidential candidacy. By most :alculations, it was more effective than any of Goldwater's ›wn efforts. Reagan was deluged with letters. *National Review*, the right-wing magazine, printed his pithy explana-ion of Goldwater's tidal defeat. The voters were misled, Reagan concluded. He added a postscript warning against nen like Nelson Rockefeller and William Scranton.

In 1965, he emerged as a candidate for governor of California. Trimming his sails, he rejected support from the John Birch Society, charging that it had been infiltrated by a unatic fringe. But the old ties were not entirely severed. In 1965, Reagan went to Connecticut to address a state Repub-ican Citizens Committee that A. Searle Pinney, the state Republican chairman, denounced as "a kooky fringe." G.E. board chairman Cordiner introduced Reagan.

Edward Langley, the former G.E. public relations man, wrote last summer that Reagan owed it all to his tour as company spokesman. Those eight years had been "the greatest accidental political training program of all time." This was not a new assessment. Leo Litwak wrote in *The New York Times Magazine* late in 1965: "Perhaps a conser-vative political candidate has been made in the process of touring for General Electric." □

THE MAKING OF REAGAN (II)

Blacklist? Never Heard of It

LARRY CEPLAIR

Ronald Reagan's remarks about the domestic ver-sion of the first cold war, Hollywood division, in an interview with Robert Scheer (*Los Angeles Times*, March 6, 1980), demonstrate that Reagan has either a faulty memory or a faulty learning capacity. The American Communist Party, he told Scheer,

> had secured domination of several unions in the picture business, and was trying to take over the motion picture in-dustry, and all of the re-writing of history today, and the stories that we have seen, and screenplays and television plays, and so forth, about the persecution for political belief that took place in Hollywood, believe me, the persecutors were the Communists who had gotten into positions where they could destroy careers, and did destroy them. There was no blacklist of Hollywood. The blacklist in Hollywood, if there was one, was provided by the Communists.

Let's look at the facts. At the height of its prosperity, the Hollywood movie studios employed nearly 30,000 workers; at the height of its popularity, the Hollywood branch of the Communist Party enrolled 200 to 250 people. Communists were easily and regularly outvoted (by 9-to-1 margins in the Screen Actors Guild, for example, as Reagan told the House Committee on Un-American Activities in 1947), purged from the ranks (by the largest union, the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, in 1939 and 1947-49), or removed from leadership positions (by the Screen Writers Guild in 1947).

Communists were vocal and committed and exercised some cultural and political influence in Hollywood between 1933 and 1946, but they had no power at all within movie studio walls. Only fifteen (of a total of 300) Communists held full-time positions as producers (four) or directors (eleven). None could do anything more than suggest to his boss a person with whom he would like to work. Not one single item of concrete evidence has been produced to sup-port the allegation that Communists prevented non-Com-munists from working in Hollywood.

Finally, if there was no blacklist in Hollywood, how does Reagan account for the more than 200 people who suddenly could not find work in the industry and did not work openly for more than a decade? How does he explain the more than 300 people who were required to write self-abasing letters if they wanted to continue working? How is he able to over-look the amazing coincidence that the only thing these 500 or so people had in common was a past checkered with liberal and radical political associations?

Following his apostasy from New Deal liberalism in 1945, Reagan's ear and mind were captured by three of Holly-wood's most conservative Redbaiters: George Murphy and Robert Montgomery of the Screen Actors Guild and Roy Brewer of the I.A.T.S.E. They clearly charted his course from 1946 onward.

Reagan led the guild's effort to break the strike of Holly-wood's most democratic union organization, the Confer-ence of Studio Unions [see Daniel J. Biederman, "The Mak-ing of a Zealot," *The Nation*, June 22, 1974]; he stood aloof from the efforts of liberals to save the Hollywood Democratic Committee, the last great example of popular-front politics in Hollywood; and he appeared before the House Committee on Un-American Activities (popularly known as HUAC) as a friendly witness. He told that com-mittee, in effect, to cease persecuting Hollywood ("We have done a pretty good job in our business of keeping those peo-ple's activities curtailed") and to spend more time proving that the Communist Party was an agent of a foreign power—so that it could then be properly outlawed.

One month after Reagan's appearance in Washington, the producers announced the blacklist of the Hollywood Ten. As president of the Screen Actors Guild, Reagan met

Larry Ceplair is co-author of The Inquisition in Hollywood: Politics in the Film Community, 1930-1960 *(Doubleday & Company).*

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regularly with officers of the Screen Writers and Screen Directors Guilds to devise a plan that supported neither the Ten nor the producers but won a promise from the latter that the blacklist would not be extended. In succeeding years, Reagan served as president and vice president, respectively, of the Motion Picture Industry Council and the Council of Motion Picture Organizations, both devoted to convincing the world and HUAC that Hollywood was cleaning its own house.

When it became clear, in 1951, that HUAC members were determined to reopen the Hollywood hearings and, by extension, the blacklist, the M.P.I.C. became an integral part of the blacklist support structure. It served as a clearinghouse for repentant Communists who wanted their jobs back and as a forum for urging all HUAC witnesses to cooperate with the committee. As an executive of M.P.I.C., Reagan co-signed, in June 1951, a letter artfully phrased to imply what the signatories could not admit—a blacklist existed in Hollywood. Here is the key portion:

> We are just a few of the many loyal Americans in Hollywood who have helped bring about the complete frustration and failure of the Communist Party in the motion picture capital. On February 2, 1951, we met with Edward Dmytryk [of the Hollywood Ten] at his request. Dmytryk told us *he wished to rehabilitate himself* and he asked our advice and help. We told him that we were not interested in him personally or whether he ever got a job again. We made sure in our own minds that it was not *principally economic pressure* which had led Dmytryk to want to come clean, *although, of course, that had something to do with it.* We made sure that Dmytryk was really trying to escape the Communist trap. [My emphasis.] □

DE-MAOIZING CHINA

A Revolution On Trial

O. EDMUND CLUBB

In the People's Republic of China, the trial of the Gang of Four, along with five generals and Chairman Mao Zedong's sometime private secretary, Chen Boda, has ended. The four had been held incommunicado for four years, the generals for nine and Chen Boda for a full decade before their trial, which began last November 20, with two large panels of special judges presiding. Six deceased persons were also named in the indictment, but they were not posthumously tried.

The trial was to be a showcase for China's new criminal code which took effect on January 1, 1980. Little in the way of unexpected drama was permitted. The trial was not open to the general public; attendance of "representatives" of the Chinese public was by invitation, and foreign correspondents, and foreigners generally, were barred. The TV coverage was officially controlled and patently selective. This was a carefully managed trial, staged in the main for political ends.

It was charged variously that the five generals were involved in a 1971 plot instigated by Defense Minister Lin Biao, now deceased, to assassinate Chairman Mao; that Chen Boda, security chief Kang Sheng (also dead) and Mao's wife, Jiang Qing, conspired in 1967 to bring about the downfall of the then head of state Liu Shaoqi; that, after the death of Mao in September 1976, three of the Gang (Jiang Qing excepted) attempted to stage a military coup in Shanghai, and that all ten defendants were responsible for the deaths of 34,380 people during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

The alleged offenses must be viewed in the context of China's recent turbulent history. It was under Mao's direction that the Cultural Revolution was launched, in 1966, with the sanction of the cowed Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party. In that vast upheaval, with the Gang of Four acting in the capacity of Mao's agents, there was indeed a persecution and purge of party officials who opposed Mao's imperious will. Among those viewed as offering such opposition were then head of state Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping—both purged in 1967.

The outward pretense was maintained that Mao Zedong was not himself in the dock. But Mao's role in the Cultural Revolution could not be denied completely. In its final summation on December 29, the prosecution hailed Mao's "great contributions" to the nation, but, significantly, conceded that Mao had initiated the Cultural Revolution and that the Chinese people "are very clear that Chairman Mao was responsible, so far as his leadership was concerned, for their plight during the Cultural Revolution. . . ."

Mao's responsibility as leader provided a powerful argument for the defense, particularly in the case of the Gang of Four. If they were following the Great Helmsman's policies and orders in acting as they did, were they now to be found guilty by the new laws of 1980 and the current political line? Not all of the accused availed themselves of this defense. The five generals confessed to having been involved, in varying degrees, in Lin Biao's attempted coup. Chen Boda pleaded guilty to attacking Liu Shaoqi and former Vice Premier Lu Dingyi. Yao Wenyuan argued that he had only made mistakes, not committed crimes. Mao's protégé Wang Hongwen pleaded guilty to plotting rebellion and asked for a chance to reform. Zhang Chunqiao (rumored to have terminal cancer) disdainfully refused to testify, or even to respond to the charges laid against him.

It was the Helmsman's widow, Jiang Qing, who in the end put up the strongest fight. According to the limited television footage of her testimony released by those in power, she argued that she had acted in accord with the policy and orders of Mao Zedong and Premier Zhou Enlai. Her actions were destructive? She voiced an axiom of the Maoist revolutionary litany: "To rebel is good." She persecuted people?

O. Edmund Clubb was a U.S. Foreign Service Officer from 1928 to 1952, serving in China, Indochina and the Soviet Far East. He is the author of Twentieth Century China; China and Russia: The "Great Game"; *and* The Witness and I *(all Columbia University Press).*

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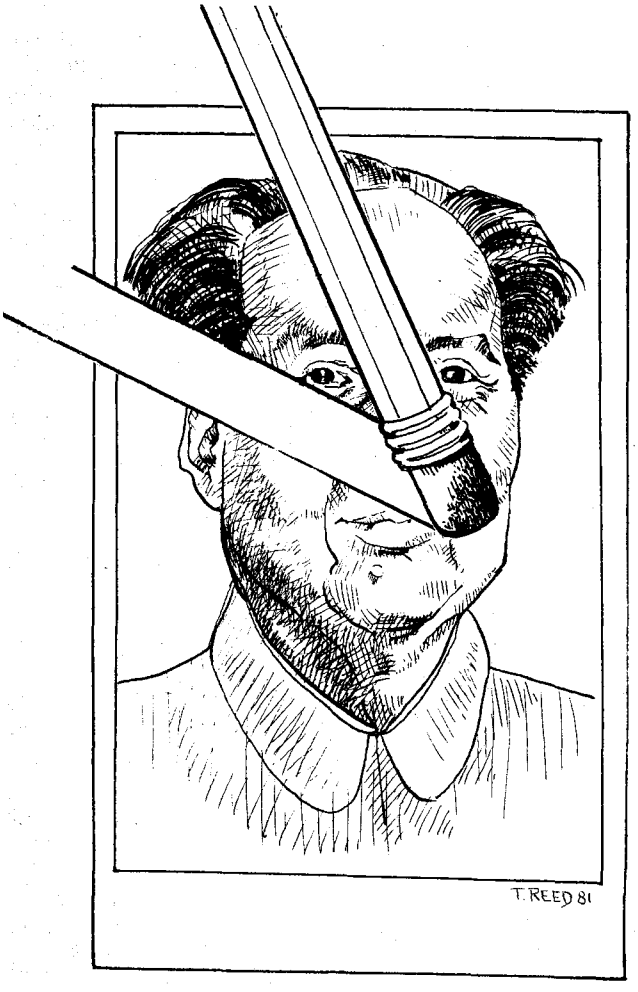
he cited her sanction: "I was Chairman Mao's dog. Whomever he told me to bite, I bit." She railed against the rosecution and the presiding judges, calling them "revi-ionists," "fascists," even Nationalist agents.

The guilt of Jiang Qing and her three close colleagues was foregone conclusion. A Nationalist provincial governor in 930 executed Mao's first wife, Yang Kaihui. Will the Com-nunists now, a half century later, execute his third consort, iang Qing, and her three colleagues—Mao's revolutionary eutenants? Probably not; for guilty too, by all political ogic, was the Cultural Revolution's author, Chairman Mao 'edong.

And there lies the prime significance of the trial of the Gang of Four. China's present leadership has undertaken le-Maoization of the governing political ideology in order o consolidate its abandonment of Mao's disruptive "un-nterrupted revolution." The political process is of course iot yet over. If Jiang Qing and her three cohorts were guilty, o were a large number of other followers of Mao Zedong. More trials will logically follow, at lower levels. But the political purification will be carried into higher levels as well. A clear sign of the times came last September when Hua Guofeng, who as Minister of Public Security had sup-ported Mao in the second purge of Deng Xiaoping in April 1976, and had then been appointed Premier by Mao, re-linquished that premiership to Zhao Ziyang. At the end of the year it was reported that Hua, who had not appeared in public since November 27 (a week after the trial of the ten began), was losing his party chairmanship. And it was Hu Yaobang, currently party secretary general and a Deng Xiaoping man, who presided at a New Year's reception staged by the Central Committee. The New China News Agency reported that "an atmosphere of joy and unity" prevailed, and offered no explanation of Chairman Hua's absence.



The speculation is that Hu Yaobang, either in his present capacity of secretary general or as chairman, will soon formally succeed to Hua's power, probably at the twelfth party congress, to be convened sometime after February. If things go as seemingly planned, that meeting will most likely be the occasion for a formalizing of the process of de-Maoization begun soon after Mao's death and advanced by the trials of the ten. Mao will be defended, as suggested by the prosecution of the five generals and Chen Boda, for "positive" accomplishments; but his revolutionary messianism will be further condemned in favor of the hard pragmatism of Deng Xiaoping and his supporters.

But that will not mean that factionalism in Chinese politics has ended. Deng himself is mortal too. He is now winnowing the leadership in preparation for an orderly succession to power by men of his own political stamp after he dies, but there is no certainty that the process will follow a smooth course. Personal ambitions and animosities aside, under existing difficult political and economic circumstances there will be growing discontents in Chinese society and continuing policy differences within the leadership. Mao Zedong's strategic conception of "uninterrupted revolution" may be officially out, but in today's China the potentials for major power conflicts, and corresponding shifts in the political line, clearly remain. □

Revolution

(Continued From Front Cover)

then, is bipartisan. Fiscal stinginess toward the poor combined with fantastic remilitarization are not the programs of liberals *or* conservatives but the gut instincts of both. It is not my purpose here to deal with the conservative policies of the moment, however. Rather, I want to discuss the *culture* of reaction, to note the deformations of public spirit necessary to sanction a course that is premised upon, and in turn encourages, the worst in human behavior.

The United States has never been a revolutionary society and therefore will never experience the full consequences of a counterrevolution. One will not find here the overt repression of the Paris Commune, the violence of the Friekorps or Peronism (except in a Broadway musical, *Evita*). At the same time, there is a particularly American form of reaction, a soft-core counterrevolution that harms the spirit as much as violence and state-directed terrorism maim the body. For it is as true today as it was in 1950 that reaction can be sustained only by rewriting history, suppressing democracy, excluding alternatives, corrupting discourse and

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distorting the truth. What makes the present period comparable to the early 1950s is not the specific form that reaction takes—our McCarthy period will not feature loyalty-oath crusades and Fifth Amendment abuses—but the general culture of reaction that emerges whenever the United States decides to go on a hysterical binge instead of facing its social problems.

A definitive feature of the culture of reaction is the collective rewriting of history. In their day the McCarthyites, joined by a surprising number of liberal Democrats, rewrote the history of the New Deal. Gone was the notion that the Roosevelt Administration represented a conservative attempt to save American capitalism. In walked an interpretation that stressed the triumph of radicalism, viewing the New Deal as a period in which Communist elitists came to occupy the commanding heights of state power. America, it was claimed, had lost its righteous devotion to the wonders of capitalism, and only a determined effort to rid Washington of alien influences could restore the society to its historic faith in business. Conservatives, thoroughly discredited to the point of extinction in the 1930s, rode anti-Communism back to power a decade later.

What I know of the New Deal and the Truman period comes from books, but this is not the case with the 1960s. A considerable rewriting of the history of that decade has taken place in the last few years. The Great Society, which I recall as timid, is seen to have overreached itself. Blacks asked for too much, the astonishing self-restraint of their protests conveniently forgotten. Although I was personally unsympathetic to the counterculture, I will never forget the gentleness and warmth of so many of its adherents, who are now viewed as drug-laden, Dionysian precursors of decadence. But nothing arouses my anger more than to hear public officials—whether Ronald Reagan or Zbigniew Brzezinski—proclaim that the war in Vietnam was a noble cause. The war was to my generation what the Great Depression was to the generation of my parents: an experience indelibly seared in memory, which made it impossible ever again to believe in one's innocence. To this day I cannot remove from my mind the images of Lyndon Johnson lying with every breath he took, the craven cowardice of Hubert Humphrey and the bureaucratic madness of the war machine. I do not understand how a single American my age could ever again believe that his or her society is not flawed to the core.

For the record, it is worth pointing out that no other movement in American history, with the possible exception of the abolitionist, was as right in both its premises and its ethics as the mass movement against the Vietnam War. No amount of Vietnamese Stalinism, no invasions of Kampuchea and no economic crisis in Southeast Asia can ever change the fact that the anti-war movement was right to resist with all its strength the aggression committed by the Government of the United States. Nor can it alter the fact that the anti-war movement was not motivated by narrow self-interest (many of the activists were either past draft age or women, who were not draftable); it was not corrupted by opportunism and was courageous enough to persist in the face of extreme provocation from respectable leaders of society. Above all, it was successful. I shudder to imagine what the United States would be like now if the anti-war movement had either failed or sold out. But in the conservative mood that has seized America, idealism is dismissed as unworthy of a great nation. The United States seems determined to use its military power once again, and as a result, the war in Vietnam and the opposition to it is seen in a revisionist light.

Rewriting history is an important undertaking because history contains truth, and truth is one of the major obstacles to conservative revenge. We live in a relativistic age; even to speak as if there were truth is to raise suspicion. But unless one is willing to grant that all points of view about Vietnam are equally valid, then there must be one standard against which some of them can be judged to be false. No one political tendency or movement has a monopoly on truth, and all political systems, whatever their ideology, have suppressed it; nonetheless, movements of progressive dissent, from the anti-slavery campaign and feminist movements of the nineteenth century to the radical movements of the 1960s, had a firmer grasp on what was happening in their times than the official voices of power and prestige.

For the task of suppressing the truth, societies call upon the demagogue, that figure originating in ancient Greece who ranted and raved about issues more symbolic than real so as to divert public attention from how the system limited popular participation. Joe McCarthy has gone down in our folk wisdom as the demagogue par excellence, a man willing to lie and break the rules when it served his advantage. Yet to view McCarthy as a demagogue run amok is to miss the significance of the period that bears his name. For characteristic of that time, and increasingly evident now, is a tendency that can be called the *routinization of demagogy*, the absorption of the techniques of the demagogue by the institutions of respectable political life.

The great sociologist Max Weber noted that periods of crisis give rise to charismatic figures, yet, as time passes, the charisma becomes routinized, embodied in a committee or in a process. Such is the fate of demagogy during counter-revolutionary times. The lie that sustains the demagogue becomes a collective lie, one reassuringly uttered by all, even those who know full well that it is untrue. An example of this would be the alleged military superiority of the Soviet Union over the United States. "By 1983," says an aide to Ronald Reagan named David Sullivan, "the Soviet Union will have achieved clear-cut, unmistakable strategic nuclear superiority over the United States. . . . By 1993, the United States will have ceased to be a great power and will be struggling to hold itself together as a viable nation." If

Alan Wolfe, a member of The Nation*'s Editorial Board, teaches sociology at Queens College and has recently written* The Rise and Fall of the Soviet Threat *(Institute for Policy Studies).*

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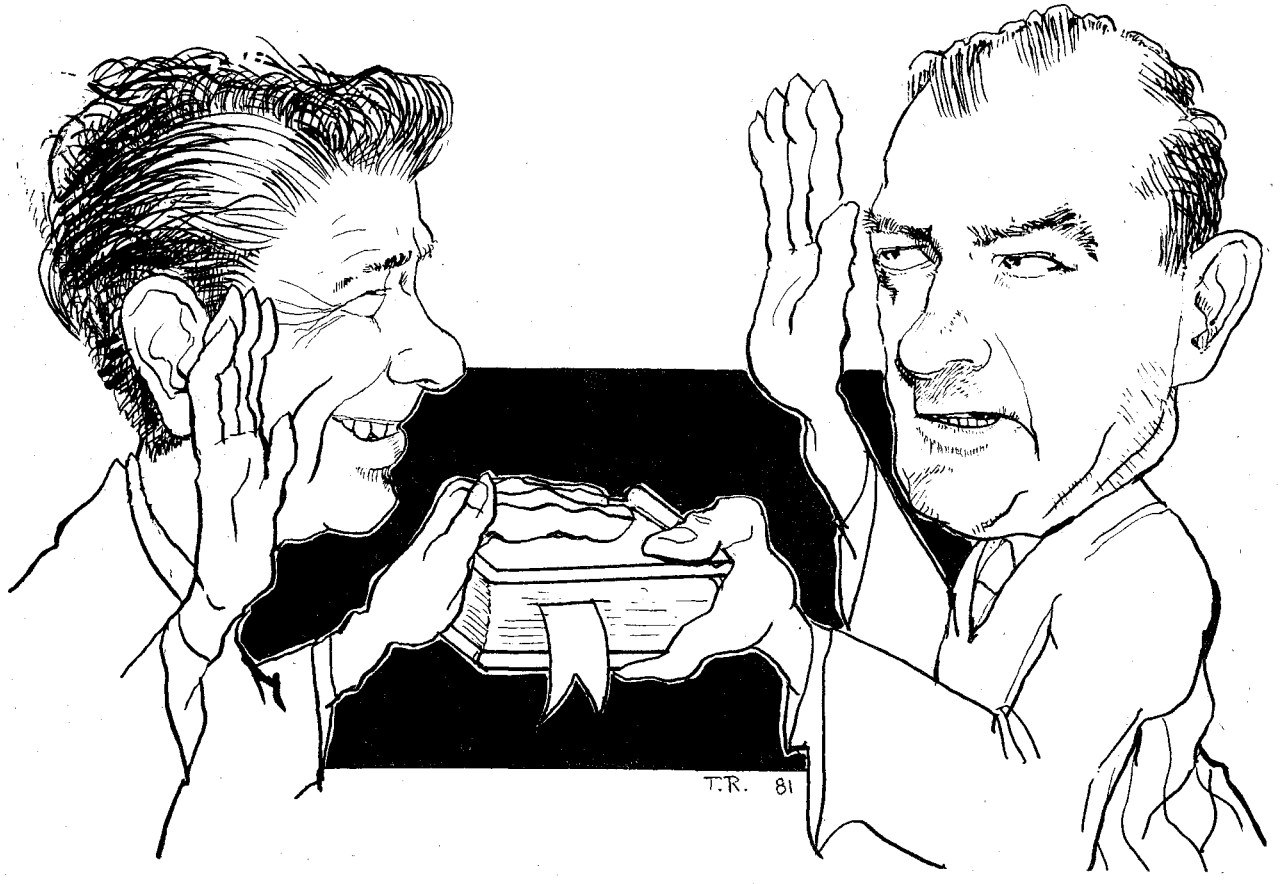
one person made assertions like these, he would be dismissed as something of a lunatic. But the themes proposed by Sullivan have become official truths, invoked by the Secretary of Defense, shared in bipartisan agreement by military planners and made the basis of policy planning. When it comes to matters of the strategic balance between the two superpowers, issues are complex, language technical, comparisons indirect and emotions strong. Under these conditions, reckless charges and outright lies—and let me make clear that the idea the United States is somehow allowing the Russians to achieve superiority in nuclear weapons is completely fabricated—become bureaucratic humdrum. The best way to make a lie true is to get the people who count to agree with it.

McCarthy was not only a liar but a man given to breaking the rules of civilized behavior. Yet his period was so debilitating not because one man broke the rules but because the rules themselves were changed so that rule breaking could be codified into certain generally accepted procedures. Developing rules to break rules is another example of the routinization of demagogy, an aspect of political culture that our time shares with the McCarthy period. Then, freedom of thought was suppressed by administrative bodies that invoked rational criteria to nullify the First Amendment. Under Reagan, it is already clear, the administrative process will be used to negate any laws or rules that are seen to stand in the way of the rapid accumulation of capital. [See Stephen Gillers, "Repeal by Indirection," *The Nation*, December 27, 1980.] The job of the Interior Secretary will be to enable developers to evade pollution-control laws or conservation requirements. The Agriculture Department will devote itself, say, to suspending public health efforts in the areas of smoking and nutrition. A characteristic of politics during reactionary times is thus a collective suspension of the normal rules of behavior. This is why Reagan can look so tolerantly on people with reputed connections to organized crime, such as Jackie Pressler of the Teamsters, who was on his transition team, and his Secretary of Labor-designate Ray Donovan, who is alleged to have paid bribes to the Teamsters. And this is why he contemplated making Martin Feldstein, who was caught out using false data in an article on Social Security, his chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers. To focus solely on how individual demagogues break the rules is to dismiss the routinized demagogy that becomes the new operating code of all.

Once demagogy has become routinized, society digs itself deeper into a hole, deliberately ignoring reality. Policy makers of both parties convince themselves that raising the price of money is the way to bring down prices, even though the contradiction should be apparent to most laymen, and the more the ideological solution fails, the more they insist that with just one more turn of the screw it will work. A bipartisan consensus not to propose alternatives to the policies being tried (do not expect the Democrats to come forward during the Reagan years with a program of economic revitalization or a foreign policy based on something other than military strength) permits the exclusion of reality from political debate.

The more that reality is ignored in counterrevolutionary



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times, the more the body politic is inclined to seek meaning in myths. In America, no single myth has yet emerged that offers a sweeping explanation of the national malaise, but when it does, you may be sure that it will blame some sinister outside force for domestic ills. Writing about the European experience with counterrevolution, Arno J. Mayer pointed out that the demagogue "foments popular hatred and wrath against conspiring groups and individuals whose nefarious and insidious machinations are said to be aided from abroad. This Trojan Horse is stigmatized and arraigned for masterminding, if not executing, the corrosion and ruin of government, society, and culture." Who will play the role of cosmic villain this time? Despite years of moderate rhetoric and cautious behavior, the Russians can still serve, especially when they invade, or seem to be preparing to invade, another country. Iranians have recently taken the part, but they seem a temporary stand-in for an external enemy of more stature. Another round of anti-Semitism has been tried, this one approved by many American Jews, for the Semites involved were the ones with oil under their land who insist on determining the price they will charge for it. It hardly matters who is chosen so long as someone is. When those responsible for mysterious forces like inflation, the decline of U.S. hegemony, or slower economic growth are excluded, by bipartisan agreement, from blame, then the blame must be placed somewhere else. The myth that our troubles are imported must be preserved over the reality that they are a product of the way we do business.

The political atmosphere of counterrevolutionary times is thus characterized both by a national need to air matters of concern and a national refusal to do so within the political process. As a result, the political parties become confused about their roles, each contributing in its own unique way to the conservative atmosphere. To understand how this works, we must reflect for a moment about the parties' function in more normal times.

Americans, it has often been said, want contradictory things. They crave freedom, for example, but they also want the security that can protect them from failure. Thus the farmers who enjoy price supports and the businessmen who scramble for Pentagon contracts will sincerely praise the "free market." Americans want the respect of foreign nations, but they also want those nations to fear their might. The dominant sentiment favors a welfare state, but one that nobody has to pay for; a strong national defense financed with low taxes; parochialism and world power status at the same time; equality without pain; tolerance and a healthy respect for order; rapid economic growth *sans* environmental destruction; stable prices linked with corporate freedom, and respect for family, neighborhood and tradition joined to geographic and physical mobility. Amazingly enough, for a considerable period of time the country was able to pursue such contradictory goals, for it had a two-party system that embodied its schizophrenic desires. Americans could elect Democrats to represent their humanitarian impulses, but keep the Republicans alive so that generosity was not carried too far. The two parties acted in tandem: one optimistic, the other pessimistic; one telling us to be fair, the other reminding us that fairness gets one nowhere; one espousing noble uplift, the other selfishness and venality. So long as the balancing act continued, politics did not interfere with contradictory wants.

Thus was created a political system in which conservative ends would be pursued under the leadership of liberal administrations. As the majority party generally in control of the White House, the Democrats would articulate the progressive sentiments of the people: better housing, Social Security, civil rights, foreign aid. But a conservative coalition, dominant in Congress since 1938 and in control of the Presidency twice (now starting its third round), would either prevent these goals from being realized or, if unable to block them, distort them into unrecognizable forms. Working together, liberal rhetoric and conservative practice insured a system in which people could retain both their humanitarian self-images and their selfish instincts. The Republicans became the party of the id, reminding people, in Hobbesian rhetoric, that the world was a nasty place in which selfishness was the only appropriate outlook, while the Democrats, as the party of the superego, told the people that restraints on immediate gratification were necessary for the collective betterment of all. So long as the id and the superego complemented each other, the political system, like the individual, could function.

In counterrevolutionary times, the balancing act necessary to keep the political system functioning breaks down. The Democrats, whose main role is to prevent the American people from feeling the consequences of their own selfish and shortsighted desires, no longer have the will or inclination to resist the Republicans' Hobbesian onslaught. The party goes into a tailspin, engaged in a futile process of trying to convince the American people that it is more conservative than its opposition. But, as Jimmy Carter discovered, the people are not fooled; if it wants conservatism, the electorate will take the genuine article.

Yet, even in reactionary times, the Republican Party needs the Democrats to prevent it from carrying its ideas too far. Most Republican politicians know, in their heart of hearts, that their proposals are ludicrous over-simplifications brewed for popular consumption. Imagine the shock when, engaged in demagogy as usual, the Republicans find that the check of Democratic resistance is no longer there. Suddenly faced with exercising untrammeled power, the Republicans announce, as Reagan's team has already done, that they did not *really* mean to suggest that the economy could be improved in one or two years, that they will need time before they can put their notions into practice. A party so accustomed to defeat has difficulty accommodating itself to victory. Once in power, the Republicans open themselves up to the same charges they leveled against the Democrats.

Thus, the election of 1980 takes on a tremendous historical significance. Since the end of World War II, the Democratic domination of the state has not produced an era of peace and progress. Our political life instead has been a

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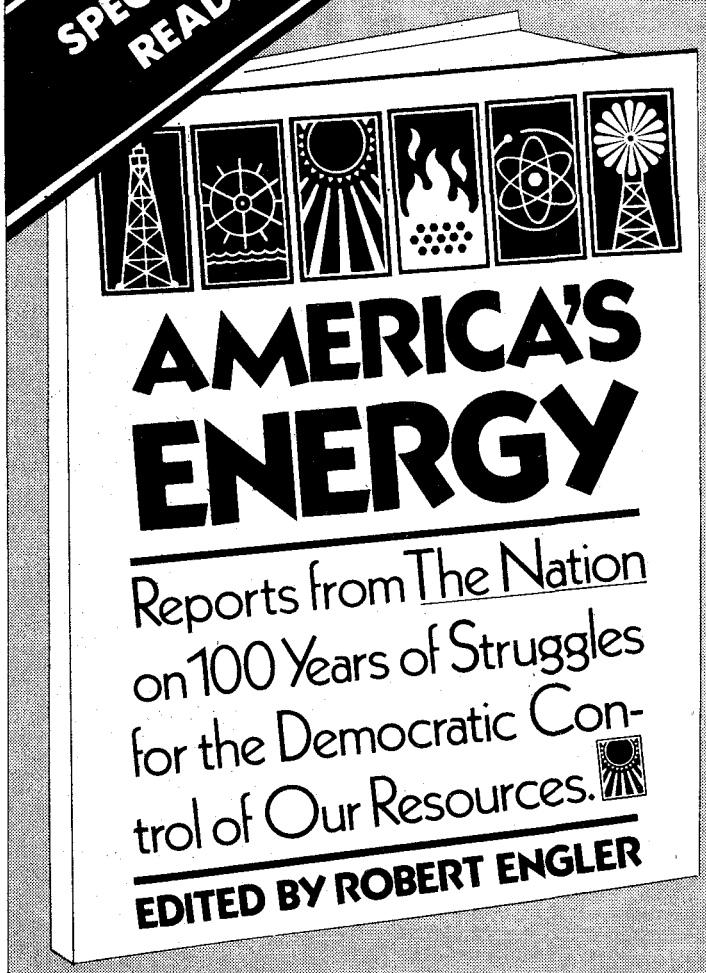
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rendezvous with a reactionary destiny, with Democratic rule only postponing the actual meeting. For the most important feature of American politics is not what is present in it but what it lacks—namely, a ballast on the left. With all policy and discussion tilted toward the right, the best one can hope for from the Democrats is that they will contain those whom Dean Acheson once called the primitives. As was true during the McCarthy period, liberalism and progress were not stopped in 1980; rather, the checks on regression were removed, enabling conservative inclinations that were present all along to come to the fore.

Viewing the counterrevolution of the 1850s, Marx wrote that the "party of order"—the old aristocratic machinery and the captains of industry—gained increasing power with each turn of the conservative wheel. America also has its party of order—the military-industrial complex, the Central Intelligence Agency-spook network, the police, the Moral Majority and Big Business—and it too has been raising the price that it charges for its political support. Since conservative times are inevitably turbulent ones, characterized both by a rapidly changing international order and by a pronounced shift in domestic politics, incumbent administrations find that the safest course is to meet this price, however exorbitant. To their sorrow they will learn that caving in to demands from the party of order is bound to have negative consequences; an order based upon inequality and irrationality cannot long endure.

In a situation like the present one, in which the parties are no longer able to play their historic roles, intellectuals and publicists attain greater influence than usual. During counterrevolutionary times, there is a strong market for ideas. There are buyers—the American Enterprise Institute, the Defense Department, corporations, the new Administration—and there are sellers—ambitious academics seeking contracts, grants and graduate centers. This being one place where the market actually works, sellers and buyers find each other, and the accumulation of ideas intensifies.

As a result of the heightened demand for ideas (though only ideas that reinforce the power of the party of order), universities will be called upon to serve the state more directly, as they were during the McCarthy period. The free interchange of ideas will be abandoned as an unnecessary luxury. Now that reaction is settling in for the long haul, a major move is again underway to remove radicals from the academy. During the McCarthy period, this was accomplished in the simplest possible manner: people were fired. Not so at present. Although there have been some publicized cases of radicals being denied tenure or positions, the transformation of the universities is being accomplished through a redefinition of what constitutes proper knowledge within academic subfields.

In response to the controversies of the McCarthy era, many universities sought to emphasize quantitative techniques in the social sciences. This device served to relegate inherently controversial disciplines to a limbo of scientific neutrality. This entailed not only the suppression of a Marxist tradition in both economics and political science but, in the 1950s, the slow death of "institutionalism," a school of thought associated with Thorstein Veblen and C. Wright Mills that placed society's leading institutions under an academic microscope. The "abstract empiricism," as Mills called it, that replaced institutionalism was in turn discredited in the 1960s, but the new conservative mood is giving it a second life in the form of the "economization" of the social sciences. Whatever the subject of inquiry—voting, family life, obedience to law, race, urban growth—the dominant assumptions and methodologies are borrowed from economics, considered the most rigorous of all the social sciences. The dominant precept is: he or she who does not maximize utility does not exist—at least as an object of scientific inquiry. What is taking place in the social sciences is a triumph of a vulgar economic determinism that makes Marxism look culturally diverse. "We did not consciously build great cities," Wilbur Thompson of Wayne State University recently noted, "we assembled large labor forces to feed large plants."

This sudden rush to appropriate the discourse of economics cannot be divorced from the larger trends in society; economics generally succeeds when economies fail. Three consequences follow for academic life and therefore for our political existence as a society. First, the field of economics itself will become more ideologically rigid, for a master science cannot afford diversity in its approach. Second, the narrowing of subject matter will be matched by a broadening of technique. Energy that might have gone into content will be applied to method: one confines oneself to proving what the powers that be want proved—that rent control hurts tenants, for example, or that the poor lose from the minimum wage. Finally, those who use alternative methods become expendable, not because of their point of view, of course, but because they cannot be considered serious scientists. Under the pressure of these trends, universities in the 1980s are already becoming what they were in the 1950s: more a reflection of an irrational society than a source of alternatives to it.

The coming years promise to be especially difficult. Gunnar Myrdal once observed that America is the most conservative of countries, but that the values it tries to preserve are liberal ones. This is no longer true. As economic stagnation and blocked social mobility combine with the stalemate in world affairs, the optimism that tempered Hobbesian realism withers away. America continuously rediscovers reaction, and each time it thinks it has found something new. There is nothing new about the present mood. America has fought with its self-created demons before. It seems determined to do so again. The United States survived the McCarthy period, although in badly damaged form, and it will survive its current craziness, in spite of itself. Yet it remains incomprehensible why a country so rich and strong has to punish itself so thoroughly with anxiety and neurosis. America will have its counterrevolution, but without a revolution to counter it is only a matter of time before the country tires of reaction as it has tired of just about everything else. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

A Rocky Mountain Floater

JEAN BETHKE ELSHTAIN

THE TIME FALLING BODIES TAKE TO LIGHT: Mythology, Sexuality, and the Origins of Culture. *By William Irwin Thompson. St. Martin's Press. 261 pp. $14.95.*

William Irwin Thompson, formerly on *The Edge of History* (1971), has now fallen off, not like Humpty Dumpty in an unfortunate mishap but with prevision and in the absolute conviction that he and those like him are the precursors of a new planetary consciousness. Thompson invites this new day from the Boca Grande, Colorado, headquarters of the Lindisfarne Association, which he describes as "a contemplative educational community devoted to the study and realization of a new planetary culture." Perhaps a Rocky Mountain high helps to explain his latest voyage into the heart, soul and genitalia of "archetypal imagery" and human culture. Certainly Thompson has made it difficult for those of us who have "never floated out of the body in meditation or sleep" to evaluate his work; indeed, he insists we are disqualified for the task. Only an initiate into a rarefied knowledge beyond the world of time and space ("recognized," Thompson casually notes, "to be a projection") can truly see the light.

Seeing Thompson's light is no casual close encounter of the mythic kind. Just a select elite, according to his standards, can have access at this time to that mythopoeic mode of consciousness that will save us all if we will but let it. "To understand all the dimensions of the myth of Isis and Osiris"—central to Thompson's alternative to the thinking of poor "literal-minded fools"—"a scholar would have to be an Egyptologist, a cultural historian, a psychologist, an astronomer and an initiate of one of the major esoteric schools." As I am none of these and have no immediate plans to become any of them, my reflections on *The Time Falling Bodies Take to Light* should be read as the critical musings of a nonfloater concerned, in her literal-minded way, with the political as well as the cultural and intellectual dimensions and implications of Thompson's arguments.

The problems begin at the beginning, with Thompson's dedication of his book to "the Eternal Feminine." This bodes ill immediately for real females (literal-minded ones at any rate), for part of what women have had to contend with over the years is men who either damn them as evil seductresses and Pandoras who open boxes, or celebrate them as eternal goddesses and symbols above and beyond the realm of ordinary people. Thompson's eternal feminine is the Great Mother who is both "an archetype" and, "from a metaphysical point of view, . . . a metaphor for the receptacle of cosmic space itself." Oh dear. Leaving aside cosmic receptacles, the archetype presents numerous difficulties if one values coherence. Archetypes are said to reside in a sphere where "all the variants of a myth" come together in a blurry confusion (Thompson might call it a synthesis). Differences between culturally distinctive and historically specific myths don't matter at all, it turns out, for lurking here, there, everywhere, some ultimate set of mythic structures transcends or negates all the differences so everything is pretty much the same as everything else.

Under the sway of archetypalism, Thompson locates causality outside time and space—this places it beyond the reach of human agency as well—and extols the "fact" that "there is only the one universal collective unconscious of the human species, and that this unconscious is beyond time and space." Of course, this is all lost to those he calls epistemologists, but available to all who have gone through *metanoia*, a conversion experience ("or else we have not truly seen"). Now all this might be seen, by those of us who don't find in it the basis for a new planetary anything, as harmless enough, perhaps even playful, perhaps even, as Thompson insists, as an alternative of sorts to the deadly dull reductionism of much contemporary social science. But lodging agency in ontologically peculiar entities has some rather dire moral and political implications if one takes the time to tease the matter out.

Archetypes, following a Jungian formulation (which is to say, wallowing about in obscurantist confusions), emerge as a set of "natural" entities which exist "of their own accord" and operate with "no regard" for human needs, morality, or politics; indeed, archetypes may, according to Jungian scholar Volodymyr Odajnyk, use "groups and individuals *as their instruments*" [emphasis mine]. Archetypes manifest themselves through "various images" and, to follow Thompson's reasoning, in those mythic structures to which we must all look for salvation. The problem with all this archetypal enthusiasm is that anyone who accepts the archetype as some sort of explanatory principle forsakes a view of the human subject as a purposive moral agent and thereby abandons theories of social change tied to historical agency. This is the stuff of which moral nihilism—can nihilism of the political sort be far away?—is made. The call for a return to mythic domination of human culture, as Thompson puts it at any rate, has normative implications which are potentially perverse. Either Thompson doesn't see this (having "seen the light," he has, it appears, been blinded to the dark underside of his own argument) or chooses to ignore it in his quest for the "resacralization" of human culture, history and scholarship.

Thompson loads the deck in his favor throughout *The Time Falling Bodies Take to Light*. He entices us with his sacral option by setting up extremely unattractive contrast models as the *only* conceivable and available alternative to his mythic *Weltanschauung*. If we reject myth of the archetypal sort we become, by definition, mean-spirited, narrow-minded, hubris-riddled scientific imperialists out to rule the world for M.I.T. Our imaginations are either soaring in the outer reaches of "superconsciousness" or sullied in the here and now of "ego domination." Either we have a "profound appreciation of how everything is very subtly involved with everything else" or we understand nothing at all: we are philistines and nincompoops. Nobody with any cultur-

Jean Bethke Elshtain is associate professor of political science at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

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al or political awareness wants to be lumped with the epigones of a dead knowledge and a dying culture. If we accept Thompson's contrast models we either join hands with consciousness-lowering professors, symbols of our stupid sectarian age, or we levitate toward his new planetary consciousness. Those of us who want nothing to do with either alternative are omitted from Thompson's world. We would complicate the Manichaean starkness of his alternatives.

The pity is that Thompson has a nose for important questions. It *is* true that the domination of much scholarship by a narrow, instrumental rationality is implicated in what might be called the spiritual impoverishment of contemporary knowledge. There is a soul-deadening, passionless, ostensibly apolitical concentration of intense methodological sophistication on problems and issues of little serious or meaningful human interest. The culture as a whole is rather depressed, no doubt about it. People turn, in part, to charismatic, cultish, or simply communitarian alternatives and sects because they find so little food for the soul in modern life. But the call to re-enchantment Thompson provides is an open invitation to regression, to the embrace, not of a robust, passionate vision of substantive reason but an irrationalism that allows no room for critical reflection from within.

Rationality, equated by Thompson with cramped and cribbed scientism, goes out the window as the archetypes fly in. We resacralize by disarticulating our critical circuits. Those of us who continue nonetheless to fly the tattered banner of reason are dismissed as limited and rather pitiful souls, still committed to a useless language, not having had the right sorts of experiences which alone give privileged entree to a knowledge beyond knowing. Views of various trance-mediums who engage in "automatic writing" are accepted as beyond critical challenge by Thompson because these men have had authentic experiences. This is the stuff of which authoritarianism, which Thompson explicitly repudiates, is made; thus, his condemnation of ignorant or dangerous individuals who pervert mystical or pseudo-sacred experiences for crudely political ends wears a bit thin. There is no cogent way, within his own perspective, to counter any individual who makes claims upon others based upon his personal experience and self-decreed authenticity. One recalls, chillingly, Hitler's chief contribution to the political theory of fascism. According to J.P. Stern, in *Hitler: The Führer and the People*, that contribution took the form of introducing "a conception of personal authenticity into the public sphere" and using the example of his unchallengeable "living experience" as the "chief value and sanction of politics." Of course, Thompson's trance-mediums are no Hitlers, but that isn't the point. The point is that once one sets up a way of thinking that paralyzes itself at the outset in terms of any capacity for immanent criticism,

WINTER LANDSCAPE WITH A GIRL IN BROWN SHOES

The bridge was frozen. The river glared momentarily
like an arc-lamp
through the woods, the woods were silent.
Two huge black dogs lugged
an invisible rope up the hill
where the sun was coming to a quiet end,
and everyone who slipped and fell in the street
that day, fell the way a leaf
falls onto the hood of a car—
reluctantly, and with enormous contempt—
and was part of a true story.

She was little consolation in her brown shoes.
There were so many things the light averted
she could barely keep the sky
in place—which was now a hemisphere—
and she could not identify
any feeling she had that wasn't love.
Love: because the horizon had never appeared
so much like a shore, because snow
was just beginning to occupy the landscape
which was sinking,
inexplicably, like an unending page,
like too many waterfalls.

Then too the disarming wreaths gathered
around the streetlamps which just came on
did, in some way, apply to her. In the same way
that I am doing here. And eventually
the great shadow of the woods
fell across the upland pastures like a scarf—
if she had seen it—the blue scarf
that came unloose from her throat
that morning, and fell
across the white field of her pillow.

The most beautiful moments are beyond our reach.
And nothing is more ordinary
than a girl in brown shoes
walking down the street as it begins
to snow; or love,
which comes mysteriously back to us.
And yet, as is always the case, it was
just so—and it asks the question
of what happened before all this time
we've been waiting, and drawn in so close
around ourselves, and at every moment
turning farther in, with an enthusiasm
we have rarely known in the past.

Sherod Santos

Sherod Santos, a winner of "Discovery—THE NATION, '78" is a poet whose work has appeared in Antaeus, The New Yorker *and* Poetry.

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ne widens the openings for anti-emocratic politics.

There is, finally, one additional, ather extraordinary dimension to *The Time Falling Bodies Take to Light* that dds new meaning to the phrase "oral istory." Thompson seems, well, obessed with oral sex, and he makes the nost ingenious, tortuous explanations or why oral sex is the wondrous thing hat it is. If I understand him correctly, ıe winds up equating cunnilingus and onversation. His argument goes somehing like this: he begins by connecting he tongue "through the spinal column o the penis." There is a symmetry of 'as above, so below." For the woman his symmetry makes an identity of "the emale lips of the mouth which can proıounce the magic name of God, and the emale lips of the vulva . . . which can eceive the semen of Adam." Language nd sexuality distinguish us "from the ngels" (that's what he says) and they 'come together in myth and physiol-ıgy." "Higher" and "lower" are used, are one and the same, though here is an important sex difference ere as the "spinal polarity in women is not between the genitals and the brain, but between the heart and the womb."

By the time Thompson has reached page 22 of his book, one discovers what is really the burning issue here: a defense of oral sexuality as the way people "in the know" do it. The marvelous thing, given Thompson's mythopoeic genealogical account and celebration of the practice, is that aficionados of the oral art, in sating their individual lusts, are simultaneously going down on history. He writes: "In Kinsey's original studies of American sexual behavior in the nineteen fifties, he found that in general the working classes did not indulge in oral intercourse, but that the intelligentsia reveled in it. The more conscious and intellectual the individual, the more the face literally confronted the genitals in a mysteriously compelling act that seemed to touch the very foundations of consciousness." Who knows? In a country as sexually driven and beguiled as this one, Thompson's revision of what class consciousness is all about may have a future. □

This Sport-*ing* Life

PETER SCHRAG

THE SWEET SPOT IN TIME. *By John Jerome. Summit Books. 348 pp. $13.95.*

SPORTSMEN AND GAMESMEN: American Sporting Life in the Age of Jackson. *By John Dizikes. Houghton Mifflin Company. 339 pp. $15.*

AN OUTSIDE CHANCE: Essays on Sport. *By Thomas McGuane. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 243 pp. $10.95.*

I liked Jim Fixx when he was fat. That was long before he became the complete runner and author of what I assume is now the all-time best seller on the subject. In those days Fixx was just a magazine editor in New York—a nice, bright, overweight fellow trying to figure out what the women who read *McCall's* would think interesting (or, more to the point, what Norman Cousins, who was Fixx's boss, might think the women who read *McCall's* would think interesting). It didn't work out for him—or for Cousins—and the last time I saw him in the flesh, back in 1969 or 1970, he had been unjobbed.

One can't, of course, blame everything that's happened since on Jim Fixx, but he is as good a symbol as any. He may still be a nice fellow running around the hills of Riverside, Connecticut—he certainly seems like a nice fellow in those commercials on television, pouring his family their Quaker 100% Natural Cereal. And yet it's hard to forget that after the thousands of years humans have been running without self-consciousness or premeditation (largely, of course, for survival and not pleasure) this nice young man would not only help convert running into an industry but, much worse, help make the sniffing of one's own jock into a respectable and sometimes all-absorbing activity for large segments of the middle class.

There are two troubling aspects about this self-consciousness. Most obviously it is a major element of the new narcissism, something that has been blamed too much on the human potentialists, the encounter gurus and the various psychobabblers who encourage you to get into your head, and not enough on nice, clean-cut former New York editors who get you equally absorbed in your body. At the same time, it turns perfectly innocent and casual pastimes into all-absorbing careers. Put an *-ing* on the end of certain simple words and you can create a new pseudo-discipline of an ordinary human activity. Parenting. Birthing. Running. These are then converted from something one does or is into something one *can get into*. The damage is not simply to language but to the pressing collective needs of humankind that these forms of into-it-ness help one get out of. Most damaging, they totally undermine self-confidence in one's own ability to cope without expert advice, without the right equipment, the right credentials, the right clothes, all in the name of increasing it. They create subjects of nice things that don't deserve to be subjects, and thus destroy most of the simple virtues they once had.

The prime exhibit at hand is John Jerome's *The Sweet Spot in Time*, a book about recent discoveries in the biomechanics of sport that links a vast amount of anatomical detail—about aerobic and anaerobic pathways, about stereogenesis and proprioception, about

Peter Schrag, editorial page editor of the Sacramento Bee, *is the author, most recently, of* Mind Control *(Pantheon).*

Aleksandra Kollontai

Socialism, Feminism, and the Bolshevik Revolution

Beatrice Farnsworth. As revolutionist, opposition leader, highest-ranking woman member of the fledgling Soviet regime, and finally diplomat in virtual exile, Kollontai worked tirelessly to create a humane form of communism that would be responsive to the needs of women. This book explores her many roles, analyzes her successes and failures, and draws from her personal and political writings to provide what Robert V. Daniels describes as "clearly the definitive work on this important and intriguing figure." *Illustrated.* $28.50

Stanford University Press

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the isotonic contraction of muscles—to athletic performance. Jerome's central question, as the jacket blurb puts it, deals with the "moment of physical perfection, when the ball sings off the racket, when the putt rolls inexorably toward the cup, when the dive knifes into the water. But how do these 'miracles' happen? Why do they occur so rarely for some, yet so effortlessly for others?"

There is, of course, no answer. Jerome piles detail on detail—about training, about blood chemistry, about body mechanics—without ever making it clear what the argument is. The chief benefit, he suggests, is that,

> after researching all the details and gaining some degree of understanding of the mass of complexities involved in the athletic process, I now cry at track meets. . . . Working on this book has so expanded my appreciation that almost any athletic performance is immeasurably richer for me. This view of sports—of the human body as athletic instrument, of sports as expressions of the finite limits of the body and as means of exploring the mechanisms at work to set those limits—positively illuminates great athletic performances, at least for me.

Not for me. I do not require that sort of illumination, nor, I suspect, do most others. I find it positively destructive of what Rolfe Humphries meant by the "beautiful mystery" of a sport like baseball—its poetry, its rhythms, its fantasy, its exquisite timing. I do not want to trouble myself with Willie Mays's synapses when contemplating his catch of Vic Wertz's towering fly in the 1954 World Series, or Wertz's either. I do not give a hoot about the biomechanics of Tug McGraw's pitching arm last fall in Philadelphia; enough to know whether he was tired or not, something I can generally tell without understanding a great deal about muscle tissue or the circulation of oxygen through the body.

Jerome's real point, one suspects, is made covertly at the very end of his book:

> But there's another result of all this investigation which is much more important for athletics—and for the species—than any wholesale revision of the record books. This great swelling of understanding is spreading far beyond the limited world of athletics, into the general public consciousness. It is doing so at the same time that the public is learning, by direct physical experience, of the optimism of the cell.
>
> The ecologists keep telling us that there is no free lunch. In a finite universe infinite growth is impossible. . . . We must accept limits; we must begin to think small, reduce our appetites, cut back. For decades we've devoted great portions of our massive resources to nothing more ennobling than the reduction of physical effort in our lives. One result has been the construction of a society around the laws of entropy, around the eventual running down of the universe. A kind of paralysis of despair is the perfectly reasonable response. After all, there is the entropy of aging, too, a running down of the organism that is irreversible.
>
> No thanks, says the cell. Only *test* it—just require of it a little more than its existing, steady-state capacity—and it responds by thumbing its metaphorical nose at the laws of entropy. In fact, the more you require of it, the more it gains in response. . . . What is truly indomitable about us is this characteristic of all living tissue, this capacity of the cell to flout the laws of entropy: to steal energy out of stress, and with it to construct new health. Free lunch. The only free lunch there is.

Yes, yes, he does say it. Where Ronald Reagan will abolish economic limits by finding oil in the ground that isn't there, Jerome will do it by massaging the cell. We will save civilization, create new possibilities, discover as yet unsuspected horizons by tuning our bodies, examining anaerobic thresholds and revolutionizing human performance. Thus what has seemed, at best, unrelated to the social problems of our times and more likely egocentric and antisocial, becomes the greatest of social acts. We will run not just for hunger or muscular dystrophy or crippled children (the logic of all of which I have never understood either): we will study our bodies and run for God, for country, for the future of civilization as we know it.

Americans have always had a difficult time just having fun for the fun of it. John Dizikes, in his absorbing history of what might be called the American style of play, shows how from the beginning it was necessary for American sportsmen—particularly the promoters of horse races—to find "the chink in the armor of the Puritan Party, which regarded all amusements and pastimes as 'frivolous, at the least,' and presumably at the worst as 'unprofitable.' " Thus, from the time of Andrew Jackson, people like William T. Porter

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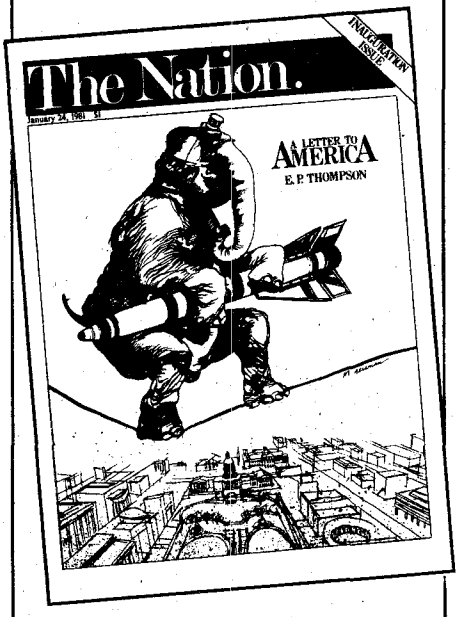

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pointed out that "sport was potentially an important business" and therefore not frivolous. From the beginning, the American way was to favor games and styles of play in which as little as possible was left to chance—that is, to real play in the other sense of the word—and in which everything could be planned from the start. Americans, he argues, don't mind that there isn't continuous action in their favorite sports 'because they don't want action, they want analysis. . . . It's the time between the plays that they value, the time they can use to fit what's just happened into the context of their strategy, adjust their plans for the next move, and guess and predict. There is as much interest in the game plan as in the game."

Dizikes has a little trouble with the theory when it comes to games like basketball (which, in the years since it was first played with a peach basket in Springfield, Massachusetts, has developed into precisely the kind of continuous-flow game that Dizikes regards as un-American). Yet in general the argument is sound enough, both in what it explains about integration of the sports ethic with the capitalist ethic and in its persuasive description of their shared corporate abhorrence of chance.

Which brings us back once again to people like Fixx and Jerome, and to products like *The Complete Book of Running* and the scores more like it now available. The real point (as already suggested) was never to run, certainly not for fun, but to contemplate and analyze oneself running. If it was not to create an "important business" of oneself running (and thus to silence the Puritan), the object certainly included the elevation of whatever fun there might have been into a project, a discipline in which one became a spectator to one's own achievement. As Dizikes points out, the logical resting place of American sports is the Astrodome, where no wind blows and all erratic bounces are (almost) eliminated. Just as logically, it is also in the running-shoe store and in the scientific tests measuring the Adidas against the Nike.

Of course it doesn't have to be that way, either in America or anywhere else, as scores of athletes and writers about sports have made magnificently clear, among them, Thomas McGuane. His *An Outside Chance* is a lovely book of personal essays about hunting, fishing, sailing and riding. There's no way fairly to summarize this book; it has no theme other than what might be described (badly) as the harmony of man, activity and environment, and the self-comprehension that comes from the comprehension of experience:

> I've been kicked, stepped on and bitten. Bitten I liked least. My most trustworthy saddle horse leaned over once while I was cinching him up and clamped on my upper leg, turning the thigh into what looked like a Central American sunset. I threw him down on the ground, half hitched his feet together, and put a tarp over him. I let him up two hours later; he thought I was the greatest man in the world, one he wouldn't think of biting. Horses only remember the end of the story.

Where today's highly trained naval architect will describe some negative trait in a boat's performance in terms of, say, section and flow, Herreshoff will simply note that it is "annoying" and tell you how it is avoided. The annoying is to be avoided just as the vacation is to be spent in pleasure. The best thing when you are out at night in a strange anchorage is "not to be worried." That sounds simple enough, but the sailor who has watched the compass shift slightly with a dragging anchor in the darkness and the ocean rumbling spookily on a lee shore knows that to sleep without worry is a concept clogged with meaning.

I quote these two passages partly

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because I like them and partly because they demonstrate how harmony is the essence of the experience. We lose ourselves in the moment and thereby find ourselves: by looking away from the distant star we see it. I said Americans have always had a difficult time just having fun for the fun of it. McGuane is one of the people who proves that that isn't always true. □

'We Have Not Far To Go'

THOMAS FLANAGAN

BADENHEIM 1939. *By Aharon Appelfeld. Translated by Dalya Bilu. David R. Godine Publisher. 148 pp. $10.*

The imaginative literature of the Holocaust seeks to imagine the unimaginable, and artistic failure is therefore a condition of its enterprise. Indeed, the reality is so monstrous that artistic success might well have the effect of blasphemy, its order and harmony an affront to what we know from reason and experience: the horror of deaths in numbers beyond reckoning, of chaos yoked to efficiency. Which should not at all be taken to mean that art can escape the responsibility of attempting a task which would seem to be, by definition, incapable of fulfillment.

Art will always find strategies, partial successes, failures which authenticate their intentions. The strategy employed by Aharon Appelfeld, an Israeli novelist whose own childhood was grievously assaulted by the Holocaust, is an extraordinarily daring one, and it has produced a short novel that is elegant, resonant and deeply disturbing. Its power to shock is embedded in its very elegance, an elegance of structure, image, voice. Seemingly, the novel records the days and seasons of an Austrian resort town patronized by middle-class Jews, their hours given over to rich pastries, concerts, innocent flirtations, pink ice cream, readings from Rilke. There is an impresario, Dr. Pappenheim, who each year organizes the festival that is Badenheim's great event. And a professor of history and his frivolous young wife, a child prodigy, the divorced wife of an army general, fragile twin youths who give readings from the poets, a much sought-after musician who has agreed to perform. The weather of mild skies, strawberry tarts and fragments of idle conversation, is the weather of European social comedy, and at times, by its intention, the novella seems a pastiche of dozens we have read—cool, shapely comedies of life in a genteel resort.

But disturbing notes are struck. The Sanitation Department, within the town but not of it, steadily extends its authority, meticulously registering the summer visitors and preparing genealogies. Its walls are festooned with gay travel posters: "The Air in Poland Is Fresher," "Sail on the Vistula," "Get to Know the Slavic Culture." The Department stays open at night; you can sit in an armchair, listen to music, leaf through a journal and dream of Poland, which comes gradually to seem an idyllic, pastoral place to which, mysteriously, the visitors may one day be traveling. And on the periphery of the town, "Porters unloaded rolls of barbed wire, cement pillars, and all kinds of appliances suggestive of preparations for a public celebration."

Our disturbance is generated less by our knowledge of what surely must be happening than by the seemingly bland, narcotized acceptance of the monstrously bizarre. The vacationers accept it, and so too does the voice that reports their days, a voice which at times is cozy, comfortable, but at other times stands back, almost to tease them. But our disorienting puzzlement finds here only its beginnings. How is it that these cultivated savorers of Rilke and white strawberries are unaware that their entire culture is being destroyed? (The present title, incidentally, points us rather too helpfully toward the puzzle. Nowhere in the novel are we given a date, and the title in Hebrew, characteristically bland, says only *Badenhaim, 'ir nofesh*, "Badenheim, resort town.") There are elements of allegory, to be sure, but the textures of scene and language, the particular stance of the narrative voice, resist allegory. To assume allegory would be to trivialize.

Neither, of course, are we given the assurances of realism, not in a novel where random, brief, inexplicable yet historically prophetic images of disaste flicker like mirages upon the imagining of the characters. Flickerings only casually rejected by the reason, shunne by the will. What Appelfeld has done, think, is to take as his very subject th imagination's inability to comprehend disaster at once senseless and total. Tha inability was as present then, when ter ror and annihilation were unfoldin themselves, as it is now, in historical ret rospect, if in far different form. He ha created the landscape of imagination' limits, a landscape peopled by thos whom culture both nourishes and nar cotizes, for whom everyday pleasures sights, fragrances, annoyances, creat the illusion of a reality more dense tha that to which the imagination refuses t give a name.

At the railway station, Badenhein distant now, the conductor of the resor orchestra says expectantly, "Soon we'l arrive in Poland. New sights, new peo ple. A man must broaden his horizons no?" An engine arrives, coupled t four filthy freight cars. "Get in!" yel invisible voices. "And the people wer sucked in. Even those who were stand ing with a bottle of lemonade in thei hands, a bar of chocolate, the headwait er with his dog—they were all sucked i as easily as grains of wheat poured int a funnel. Nevertheless, Dr. Pappenhein found time to make the following re mark: 'If the coaches are so dirty it mus mean that we have not far to go.' "

The final resonances of the novel ar muted, ambiguous, at once melancholy and sardonic. That final paragraph moves suddenly and savagely to fact but fact which has been stylized, cu down to invisible voices and a bruta simile. Frozen-framed at the very in stant of his fate, at the door of the freight car, Dr. Pappenheim speaks his own epitaph, indomitable in his feckless assertion of a rational and benevolent universe. In his final moments, he is Dr. Pangloss, but Appelfeld has made calculated use of the complexity of our response. We have known from the first pages what will happen to the people of Badenheim, but it is a knowledge which we impose upon the text, and the text exists therefore as a kind of double-writing, a mannered and elegant comedy which dramatizes a reality in which words such as "elegance" and "comedy" are weightless, meaningless. He has compelled form to express the formless, the void, the black night in which culture, art and civility serve only to betray us. □

Thomas Flanagan, author of The Year of the French *(Holt, Rinehart & Winston), is now at work on his second novel.*

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THEATER.

STEPHEN HARVEY

True West
John Gabriel Borkman

It was, of course, pure coincidence that the uptown Circle in the Square unveiled a revival of Ibsen's *John Gabriel Borkman* while Sam Shepard's new play, *True West*, premiered at the Public Theater almost simultaneously. Yet seeing them within a few days of each other produced an odd and unexpected set of cross-resonances. Both are basically naturalistic pieces that focus largely on the battle for dominance between a pair of adult siblings who have always loathed each other; each veers suddenly into a metaphorically moonlit coda, as its respective set of sisters and brothers emerges into one being at the final blackout. In their own way, Ibsen and Shepard alike forged their characters with such rude skeletal symmetry as to demand the most confident, sympathetic direction to give their creations flesh and momentum. Neither play received anything like the production it deserves.

Shepard's play in particular needs a good deal of help lest its endless string of carefully matched dualities be reduced onstage to a willful theatrical tic. The title alludes to two of the conflicts that fuel the play, one general and one highly specific. There is the California of antiseptic tract homes (like the one in which *True West* takes place) at the edge of the feral desert they're gradually destroying. Then there's the romantic Western scenario that professional screenwriter Austin (Tommy Lee Jones) is busy concocting vs. the hokey yarn-spinning of his brother, Lee (Peter Boyle), a lifelong con artist. Austin is a cultivated smoothie, favored since childhood by his bland, bourgeois mother; Lee is the hair-trigger anarchist, his reprobate father's pet, who camps out amid the sagebrush and pinches TV sets for a living. At the play's beginning, Austin is hunched intently over his typewriter at stage left, while Lee the intruder stands in the kitchen on the right, guzzling beer and exuding peeved desperation. For much of the second act, their positions—physical and otherwise—are precisely reversed. Now it's Lee whose saga is destined Soon to Be a Minor Motion Picture, while Austin swills booze, vents his temper, lifts other people's appliances and mumbles of his urge to grasp reality by retreating to the solitude of the desert.

Naturally, both alternatives are revealed as futile. As Austin puts it all too bluntly late in act two, "There is no such thing as the real West anymore"; but we all know what an empty shuck lies in store at the hands of the forces of Mammon. The latter are represented here by a walking symbol of venal old Hollywood, a producer who descends on each of the brothers in succession to weigh their competing movie treatments. Played with lumbering relish by Louis Zorich, this unctuous vulgarian is no less transparent a device than the cheap celluloid artifices Shepard so vocally despises. Austin pours contempt on the shoot-'em-up chase scenes Lee has injected into his script (and which the mogul, predictably, loves), but isn't this ostentatious identity switcheroo of Shepard's just another show-biz gimmick of a somewhat flossier order? Local color notwithstanding, *True West* is no more than an uprooted transplant of the Ingmar Bergman *Persona* game, unless we can be persuaded that Austin and Lee recognize enough of themselves in each other to be tempted to trade psyches—or indeed that they exist dramatically in the first place.

I doubt that Shepard's script made this an easy feat for his interpreters, but the mounting at the Public compounded the problem by peopling *True West* with actors who scarcely seem to belong to a common species, much less share the same bad blood. It's not just that the angular, sinewy Jones and Boyle's melted-wax corpulence are so physically mismated; they likewise speak with utterly alien accents and intonations. (We're told that Lee had been deprived of Austin's educational advantages, but this explanation doesn't suffice since it's Boyle's redneck twang that seems so meticulously acquired.) Even the dip in sheer volume of sound between Jones's deep bark and Boyle's muffled drawl gives the impression that they're still testing out the acoustics of the hall as well as their onstage chemistry as performers.

This production was afflicted with so much backstage turmoil, widely reported in the press, that it's impossible to know precisely who was responsible for *True West* in its final form. Shepard's chosen director, Richard Woodruff, quit before the opening over dissatisfaction with the casting; Joseph Papp ap-

The Real Cause Of Inflation

The new President won the election, according to the comments of the people coming out of the precinct booths, on the hope that he would arrest inflation. The Federal Reserve System has been trying to control inflation through its fiscal policies for the past 20 years. The cost has been tremendous in high interest rates to business and consumer running from 13% to nearly 22%.

Meanwhile, none of the economists who get all the national publicity has named the real villain: Land speculators who can hold land off the market at a net yearly cost of 1% — waiting for inflation, population growth, and an enormous nearby investment of other taxpayers' money to double or triple its selling price. That can triple its price 100 times or often 200 times as much as the yearly cost of keeping it idle.

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parently assumed the reins, having expressed displeasure over Woodruff's concept of the play. Probably as a result of all this confusion, the actors fell back on slick proficiency. *True West*'s hinted-at levels of jagged-edged menace thus lie dormant. Both Jones and Boyle seem most at ease when the balance of power shifts in their respective character's favor. When Lee is most vulnerable, during much of the first act, Boyle's eyes dart shiftily with reptilian calculation; Jones's Austin doesn't lurch besottedly to the kitchen floor in the second act, he swoops in a studied arc as if in a choreographed swan dive.

The staging fumbles along in a succession of muffed details. If Lee is such a scruffy lowlife, why does he enter so nattily dressed in an aquamarine silk shirt and navy-blue pleated trousers, immaculately pressed and tailored to suit his bulk? For expediency's sake, each shift of mood looks like a crabbed theatrical shorthand taken from somebody else's past formula, and the model isn't even necessarily of Shepard's own past work. With all those perfunctorily ominous silences dividing the brothers, much of act one plays like summer-stock Pinter, while Lee and Austin's subsequent desecration of Mom's pristine kitchen comes to resemble *A Coupla White Chicks Sitting Around Talking*. Shepard's ear for the bleak comic vernacular is frequently as acute as ever, but his most flavorful speeches, such as Austin's tall "true" tale of his pop's misplaced set of choppers, feel like appliquéd set pieces. In this now departed production of *True West*, the bare bones of Shepard's abstractions were all too evident, but the spirit that might animate them remained nowhere to be seen.

John Gabriel Borkman was probably destined to founder from the outset, thanks to the space it's forced to inhabit at the Circle in the Square. If there ever was a play that cried out for the narrow confines of a proscenium stage, this is it. Most of Ibsen's drama takes place in a ground-floor sitting room and the drawing room directly overhead, which are the exclusive domains of a wife and husband so estranged by their shared enmity that neither has dared enter the other's territory for years. The first act is set in the downstairs isolation ward of Gunhild Borkman (Rosemary Murphy); the charged encounter with a despised twin sister (Irene Worth), challenging her for the possession of Mrs. Borkman's sole treasure, the devotion of her son, is punctuated by the relentless footfall of her spouse (E. G. Marshall) penetrating through the ceiling above. The intended atmosphere is oppressive and claustrophobic, yet the airy arena of this theater is bleached with light, a scant few tasteful props dotting the stage. This isn't Scandinavian Gothic—Danish Modern is more like it.

I suppose we ought to be grateful for the chance to see an earnest staging of such a taxing, infrequently performed work; but there's not much point in doing it if the result makes Ibsen seem even more inaccessible to modern audiences than he inherently is. At the performance I attended, the stentorian grandiloquence of the language drew suppressed titters from some in the audience, and no wonder, since under Austin Pendleton's direction nobody on stage save Irene Worth seemed remotely comfortable with it either. Both Marshall and Murphy were rigid rather than ravaged, striking imperious attitudes while their arid, conversational readings inadvertently turned the Borkmans into refugees from Willa Cather country. While she had a few struggles of her own with the text the night I was there, the tremulous grace of Worth's voice and gestures made Ella a figure of commanding melancholy. Due in part to her, some of the play's force still comes through—even the most ham-handed rendition could never quite erase the soft, sudden grace note of reconciliation with which Ibsen concludes this play. Still, the Circle in the Square has only succeeded in reinforcing *John Gabriel Borkman*'s reputation as one of the more remote and musty works in the playwright's canon. □

FILMS.

ROBERT HATCH

Breaker Morant
The Formula

A not infrequent complaint in the theater is that the work under consideration raises questions which it lacks the wit to answer. However, the essence of *Breaker Morant*, the new film from Australia, is that it spins a tangle of moral questions, no one of which can be answered without a qualifying "yes, but." The picture was directed by Bruce Beresford (*The Getting of Wisdom*); it was adapted from a play based on *Scapegoats of Empire* by George Witton, one of three Australians court-martialed by the British Army in 1901 and the only one of them to escape the firing squad.

The trial took place at a South African outpost during the Boer War, the charge of murder having been brought against Lieuts. Harry Morant, Peter Handcock and George Witton. Morant was the senior of the three and the case centered largely on his orders and actions. The men were accused of having on two occasions shot prisoners of war and of having killed a German parson who traveled freely in the war zone, ostensibly to serve the spiritual needs of the Boers, but suspected by the defendants of being a spy and informer for the enemy.

Except for flashbacks to the incidents under review, *Breaker Morant* is a courtroom drama, and an absorbing example of that genre. The principals on both sides were strong men, passionate in their views, and the decorum of the court was often flouted by outbursts in which argument was displaced by prejudice and bitter denunciation. Brilliantly defended by a New Zealander with no previous experience in military or criminal law, the three were found not guilty of the German's death, and they did not deny killing the prisoners. The question before the court was whether what they did constituted murder and, if so, whether it was murder sufficiently atrocious to demand the lives of two of them. (Witton was much the youngest and least involved of the three.)

Here, however, are some of the factors that emerge on this slippery field of honor and justice:

§ The Australians were volunteers in the Bushveldt Carbineers, a special unit set up by Lord Kitchener to search out and destroy, by whatever means, Boer guerrillas whose actions outraged the rules of war and who were proving immune to the tactics of the British regular troops.

§ The leader of the unit had told his officers that, on orders from headquarters, they were to take no prisoners. Shortly thereafter, he was slain, not in battle but by mutilation.

§ Until then, Morant had dispatched no prisoners. The unit commander had been his friend and the brother of his fiancée.

§ Morant was an expatriate Britisher, a black sheep of good family. His nickname, "Breaker," referred to his skill at

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taming horses, but he was also a poet of some reputation (owing a great deal to Kipling's metrics, but at odds with his zeal for empire). In the eyes of the court, made up of British gentlemen, he was a renegade from their ranks.

§ The protracted war was proving a costly embarrassment to the English, particularly since the Germans were showing a disposition to enter it on the Boers' side. Kitchener needed a gesture of conciliation to persuade the enemy toward the negotiating table.

§ Australia had recently advanced from colonial to commonwealth status. Its governing class was eager to disown acts of boisterous lawlessness of the sort that Europe associated with the people down under.

On these and still other grounds, the court battle ebbed and flowed. It is easy enough to say that the prisoners did not get a fair trial; not so easy to hold that they were condemned without cause. No doubt they were scapegoats of empire, but hardly innocent goats. And though it may be true that noncombatants cannot properly judge what men do in war, there were soldiers among the Carbineers who felt and said that what Morant and his companions proposed to do was wrong. For our generation it is an only too familiar story. We know how the French behaved in Algeria; we remember My Lai. Wars between countries are bad enough, but wars against native populations are predictable horrors. The Boer War was of that sort.

Beresford directed *Breaker Morant* in what seems to have been a mood of restraint periodically broken by gusts of anger. This episode from their early history obviously rankles with the Australians and the film is dedicated to getting the facts out into the light. As to facts, it is reasonably evenhanded. The defendants were a rough lot and they fought a dirty war. But were they condemned for what they did or for who they were—and for the use a great power could now make of them? Beresford nudges you on this question, largely by his casting. Morant and Handcock, as played by Edward Woodward and Bryan Brown, are instantly and almost irresistibly attractive. However savage they may become under provocation, they are courageous, humorous, romantic soldiers of fortune. The British, by contrast, are impeccably correct, but, to say the least, they resist sympathy. Though one may detect that they are not entirely happy with their assignment, they carry it out with bland efficiency. It comes down to a struggle between two groups of men, one caught in a machine, the other operating it. Both, you might say, are victims of the machine, but the stakes are different.

And in the end, Beresford gives his countrymen the most heart-stirring deaths that ever befell a pair of splendid rascals. One thing is sure—the film will do nothing in Australia to tarnish the name of the legendary Breaker Morant.

The Formula is both the title and a one-word description of John G. Avildsen's international thriller, with George C. Scott as the honest cop, Marlon Brando as the world's most odious tycoon and Marthe Keller as a charming young woman whose lovers do not always survive the night. Also effective in brief appearances are John Gielgud as a fragile but still passionately egotistical survivor from Hitler's scientific elite, and Beatrice Straight, who is last seen floating face down in a swimming pool. The film is taken from a novel by Steve Shagan, a journeyman in the Ian Fleming tradition, but less preoccupied by exotic motorcars and bizarre modes of execution. One critical encounter occurs on a bridge above a pool of lashing crocodiles, but their role proves to be only atmospheric; Fleming never wasted such opportunities.

All in all, the movie is a pleasant exercise in deception, with almost everyone save Scott playing at least a double game and bloodshed supplied at short intervals. But what earns *The Formula* special attention is that, unlike others of its kind, the fountainhead of its wickedness is not some megalomaniac of Levantine extraction, nor yet the extermination agency of an unnamed superpower; it is the world-embracing petroleum cartel, of which OPEC is, so to speak, the tip of the oilrig. The film has it that, in the final days of the Third Reich, a team of German chemists discovered a fabulously efficient catalyst for converting coal into the full spectrum of petroleum products. This formula, along with other valuable papers, was entrusted to a particularly distinguished general, who undertook to carry them into Switzerland, it being the hope of the Nazi chiefs to trade the documents for amnesty. However, the eminent courier was waylaid by an American patrol in the Alps and nothing more was heard of the catalyst until, several decades later, a retired California chief of police was found murdered in his bed.

The case reeked of cocaine; in fact, the detective (Scott) who was assigned to it thought the smell somewhat excessive. Assembling hunches and clues, he is soon on his way to Germany and Switzerland, following what he thinks is a brilliant line of deduction, but in reality being led by the nose. For, as the audience will notice before it occurs to the cop, the people whom he interviews have a way of coming to violent ends immediately after he leaves them. The Red Brigade seems to be implicated—at least the getaway van is red—and the lovely interpreter who has agreed to travel and sleep with the sleuth does not, for all her quick wits, tell an entirely consistent story.

Enough of that; you will enjoy the details more if you don't expect them. Scott the cop gets home alive, if hardly triumphant, and has the satisfaction of telling Brando, who is as shrewd and jolly as ever was Sidney Greenstreet, that he is not in the oil business but in the oil shortage business. He also calls him a bastard, a murderer and other rude names, but Brando, whose mouth seems lined with flannel, turns him a soft answer. The last we see of the petroleum king, he is sitting with his feet on his desk, smiling at the ceiling, and the last thing we see in *The Formula* is a California traffic jam extending from screen right to the horizon.

At a quick glance, this looks like bold stuff. Everyone must know by now that the oil companies, thanks to OPEC, are bloated with profits and that no windfall profits tax will spill the breeze from their sails. It is pleasant to hear them reviled by the righteous likes of George Scott. But is there a secret formula for converting coal to cheap oil, and if there is, could anyone put it to work without permission from the oil companies, who long since bought themselves into commanding positions in the coal fields? A trail of murders makes a good yarn, but in this case the motive is a bit dubious. Exxon and Texaco, Shell and Mobil, won't be calling their lawyers into a huddle, preparing for a march against M-G-M. On the contrary, they may think *The Formula* a useful red herring across the real trail of their greed, which leads more often to Washington than to Berlin and Zurich. However, there's that one line from Scott to remember when next you see a full-page ad about the swell job the oil industry is doing to keep our wheels turning: it is in the oil shortage business—and has been ever since it invented OPEC for the Arabs. □

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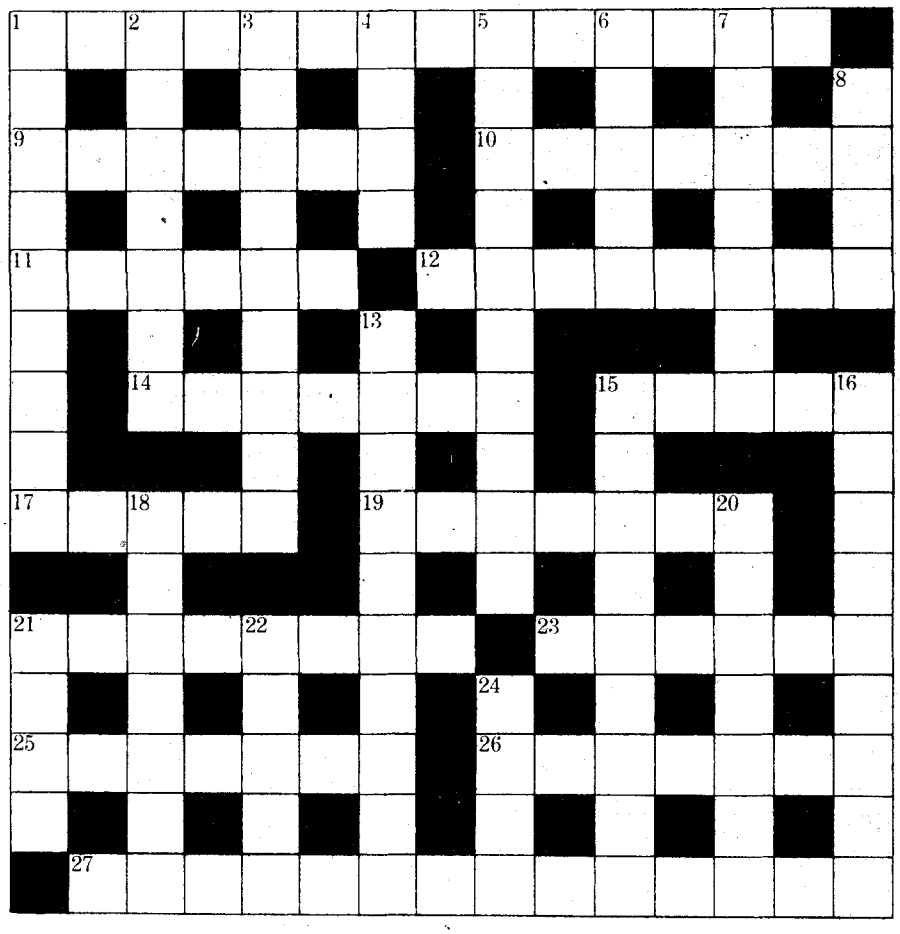

ACROSS

1 One of those particularly fast clippers? (8,6)
9 What birds appreciate in winter, being so. (7)
10, 3 and 13 down Sounds more or less like 6 to 23 is 1 down—any one of these cross ones being enough for you, naturally! (1,4,2,3,4,2,10)
11 Worldly, in a sense—as shown by Frisco's Mickey Finn. (6)
12 Did one find it a job keeping neat? (8)
14 One might start out being an excessively modest type around the Spanish. (7)
15 See 4 down
17 and 21 down Dangerous maneuvers one sometimes does on a donkey, the other way around. (9)
19 Is one's a deep green? (7)
21 They might to regroup, but it's 50-50 up, in a sense. (4,4)
23 Figure out a way to take the clamps off? (6)
25 I soon get upset with me, being on the offensive side. (7)
26 It's supposed to express emotion when people play. (7)
27 Evidently the Prince can take only one drink at the German bar, but theoretically he is well known. (6,8)

DOWN

1 In effect, I could be adequate in operation. (9)
2 A mixture of 7-Up makes things equable. (5,2)
3 See 10 across
4 and 15 across Certain slips of actors reveal an obvious reference. (4,5)
5 Screamers sometimes frighten the bosses! (10)
6 A black hole to stay away from? (5)
7 Peculiar to some, the last strain of mice. (7)
8 In a little while, and this, etc. (4)
13 See 10 across
15 Not a real loch—a true one wouldn't show it. (9)
16 Out for a good time, but the city doesn't necessarily provide for everything. (2,3,4)
18 Woodenhead, sick before and after showing hostility. (3,4)
20 Giving him zero, you might get to the root of something. (7)
21 See 17 across
22 Having no bread (new style) they did to bread (old style). (5)
24 A case in point here? The other way around! (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1852

ACROSS: 1 Fact of life; 6 Scar; 10 Larding; 11 Animals; 12 Bayeux tapestry; 14 Honorary; 15 Scenic; 16 and 23 down No-man's land; 18 Separate; 22 Castles in Spain; 24 Adduced; 25 Travail; 26 Dark; 27 Vehemently. DOWN: 1 Fall behind; 2 Carry on; 3 Obituary notice; 4 Lighter; 5 Frappe; 7 Chagrin; 8 Rose; 9 First class fare; 13 Screen play; 17 Meander; 19 Epistle; 20 Adamant; 21 Meddle.

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